CHRISTMAS NUMBER.

THE CAPTAIN

A MAGAZINE FOR BOYS & "OLD BOYS".

6d

Vol. II.—No. 9. DECEMBER, 1899.

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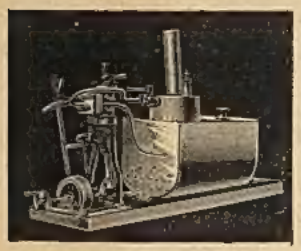

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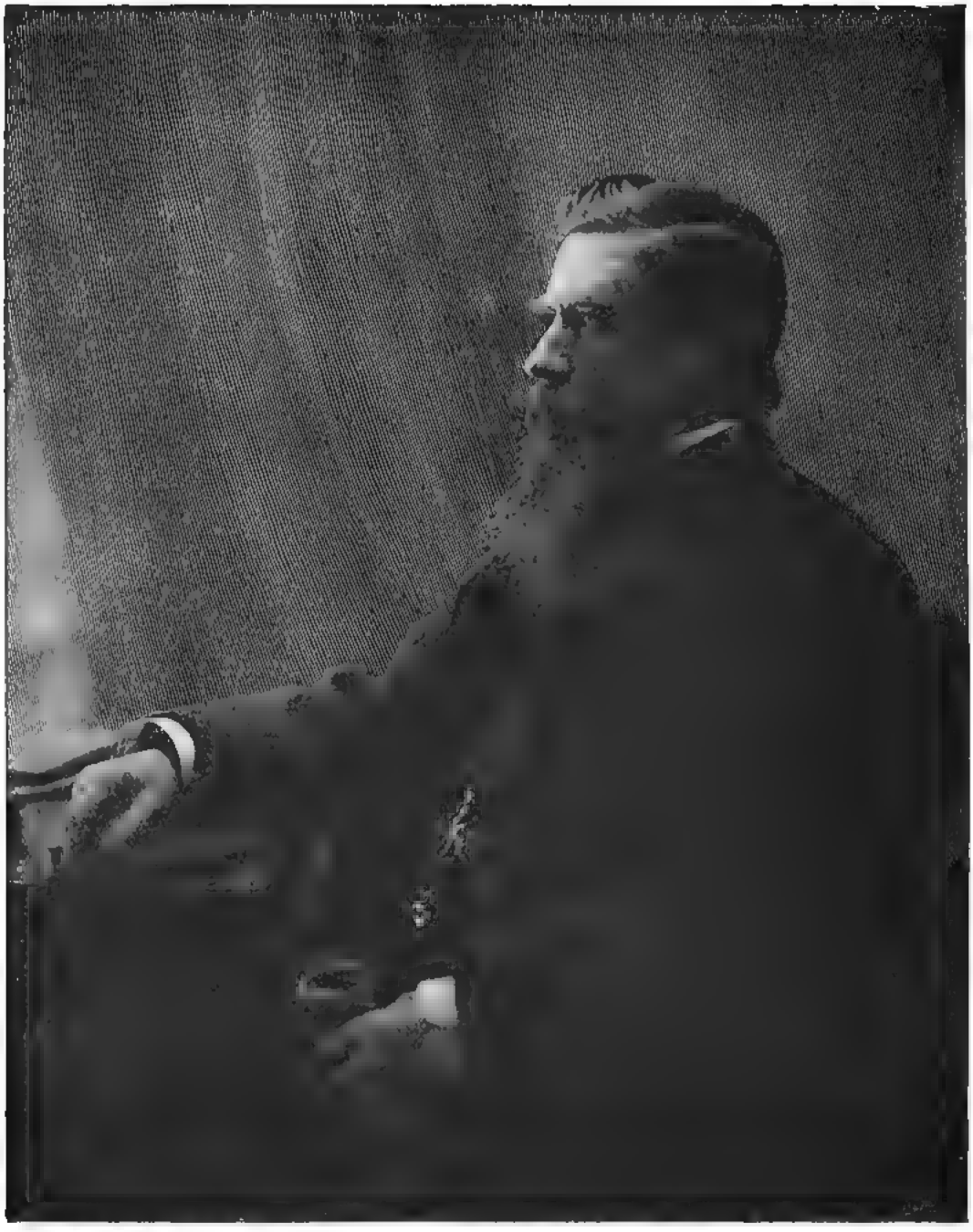

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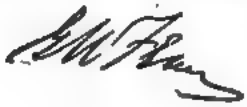


CHRISTMAS WITH MANVILLE FENN

BY KEBLE HOWARD.

HALLO! hallo! hallo! Here's Christmas come again, and fathers, mothers, uncles, aunts, brothers, sisters, and cousins are hurrying hither and thither to select a suitable present for "the boy." "What on earth can I get him?" they are saying. And then the eye catches sight of a bookseller's shop, and in they go to make a selection from the works of G. A. Henty or Manville Fenn.

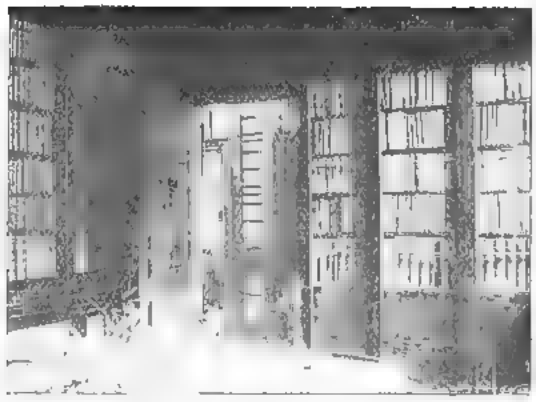
About one of these chums—for they are chums to each other as well as to you—something was said in the very first number of THE CAPTAIN. Let me tell you now about the other—about that celebrated Manville Fenn, who has written such heaps and heaps of boys' stories, and whose fifty books for boys are to be found, particularly well thumbed, in every school library.

SYON LODGE, ISLEWORTH.

With regard to Mr. Fenn's appearance, I cannot do better than refer you to the frontispiece of this number. Mark the well-shaped head, the lofty brow, the keen eye, the studious and thoughtful cast of countenance, and then you will be able to estimate for yourself the kind of qualities that go to make up the life and character of a great author. And this character, mind you, is not merely a matter of heredity. Don't run away with the idea that there was one day born into the world a baby Manville endowed with unflagging energy, temperate habits, kindly thoughts, and a wealth of knowledge. Far from it. The young Fenn had not one-tenth of the chances that you have had, or will have. It was a steep and rugged path that lay before him, but—he has climbed it.

Now, it was to hear from Mr. Fenn's own lips how he climbed this path—the ultimate idea being that I should, in my turn, inform the readers of this magazine—that I journeyed down to Isleworth on the last day in September, and sought out a house named Syon Lodge—well known to all the dwellers in that suburb of London as the severest-looking abode, standing in the most delightful old-world garden, in the neighbourhood. A great iron gate was the first obstacle in my way, but I pulled valiantly at the clanking bell, and was presently admitted into the house of the famous writer.

On entering the hall, the first thing I saw was a mighty array of books. From ceiling to floor and from wall to wall they stretched, row after row of beautifully bound volumes that proclaimed at once the home of the really



SOME OF MR. FENN'S TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND BOOKS.

literary man. Then I was ushered into the study, and here were more books, two huge cases being filled entirely with the bright covers that bore the magic name of the man I had come to interview. And there, in the midst of it all, seated at the very desk upon which he writes, day in, day out, was Mr. Manville Fenn himself.

"Ah!" he said, cheerfully, at the same time sizing me up with a piercing glance from behind his glasses, "THE CAPTAIN, I believe. Draw up to the fire, do. It's a wretched day. Have a cigarette?"

"Thanks," I said, taking one. "But, before we go any further, will you let me have some pictures?" For the art editor is always so particular to impress this upon me that I feel uncomfortable until it is done.

"Pictures?" said Mr. Fenn. "What sort of pictures?"

"Personal pictures," I replied. "Photos of yourself, your house, your family, your dogs, cats, garden——"

"Right!" He interrupted me with a satisfied sort of exclamation, and I knew that I had hit upon the proper spot when I mentioned the magic word "garden." For Mr. Fenn loves his garden almost as much as he loves his books, and that is saying a great deal. Every tree, every plant, every herb, he knows by heart, and he would know every weed, if there were any; but there aren't. That is to say, in the garden; but the orchard—such a fine old orchard, with such crowds of apples, pears, and everything else—is allowed to run wild under foot, and a better place to lounge about in on a hot summer's day I cannot conceive.

But this was the end of September, and the apples were looking very rosy.

"Tell me, please," said I, "all about yourself, beginning, as the kiddies say, at the beginning."

"When I was a little boy," said Manville Fenn, "my father's house was in Buckingham Gate, and I used to watch from the window the drilling of the Guards at Wellington Barracks. Of course I fell in love with soldiering, and made up my mind to wear a red tunic and kill the Queen's enemies all my life."

"Always a *red* tunic?"

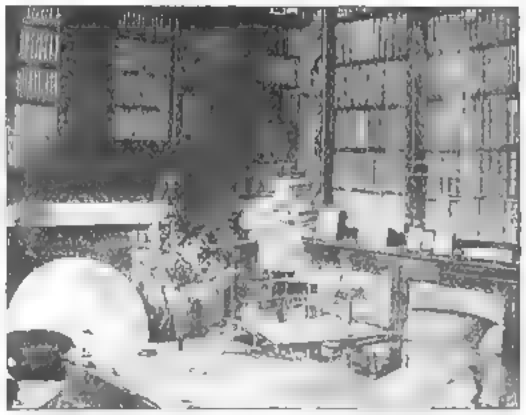
"Perhaps not always red. The 17th Lancers in blue and white looked very smart; but, on the whole, the scarlet tunic satisfied my ideas of what a real hero should wear. Once, however, I met a gentleman belonging to the Madras Light Horse, who wore light blue and silver, and rode an Arab steed. I was fascinated, and offered him my services then and there."

MR. FENN AT SEVENTEEN.

"Of course, they were promptly accepted?"

"Not promptly," said Mr. Fenn. "As a matter of fact, there was some difficulty about the age. I was just about eight at the time. I tried persuasion in the shape of toffee and cocoa-nut chips, but the recruiting-sergeant said his doctor wouldn't allow him toffee, and his wife had put her foot down as regards cocoa-nut chips.

"A little disappointed, I waited until I



MR. MANVILLE FENN'S STUDY.

was a big boy, and then went about peering into barracks, but returned home an ardent—civilian."

"But this spectacle of military life came in useful afterwards," I suggested.

"Every atom of it. In fact, everything that he ever learns is useful to a writer. I was destined to learn a good deal of the world and its ways, for at the age of thirteen I was thrown entirely on my own resources. My father met with troubles, and I had to fight my own way."

I remained quiet, hoping that I should hear how this famous author fought his battle as a boy. But this was not to be. A look of pain came over Mr. Fenn's face as he continued:

"The years of my life between the ages of thirteen and eighteen I never talk about. I want to forget them. Some day, perhaps, I may write an account of those years, or I may leave notes for the guidance of others who wish to do so, but I never enter into the subject now.

"However, I found time to attend to my own education, and one of the first men I read was Shakespeare. I can say conscientiously that even at the age of thirteen or fourteen I could read his works with great pleasure, although I will not pretend to say that I always appreciated him to the full."

"What made you begin writing?"

"Why, reading things that other people had written, and thinking I could do the same."

"Did you have the usual troubles of the young literary man?"

"No, I can't say that I met with very serious reverses, although, mind you, the payments in those days were not nearly so good as they are now. I began writing in 1864, and published my first book—a collection of stories—in 1866. My first novel appeared in 1867. It was in three volumes, and entitled 'Bent, not Broken.' The publishers were Messrs. Tinsley Bros., of Catherine Street, a firm that has now ceased to exist. They brought out some excellent people in their time, notably Miss Braddon.

"Were you ever on the regular staff of a paper?"

"Certainly. I worked for the evening *Star*, under Justin McCarthy—parliamentary sketches and that kind of thing. I did the same kind of work for the morning *Echo*, and was also dramatic critic for that paper for twelve years. Then I edited *Cassell's Magazine* and *Once a Week*."

"I OFFERED HIM MY SERVICES THEN AND THERE."

"Wilkie Collins worked for you, did he not?"

"Yes, and very particular he was that his work should not be altered at all. Even a comma inserted or omitted brought down his wrath upon the unfortunate editor's head. But, talking about particular men, I think the most exacting editor I ever knew was Charles Dickens. I worked for him when he had *All the Year Round*, and, though he was good enough to let my stuff alone, I have seen the way he used to treat some people's. I remember, on one occasion, catching sight of a proof that was lying on his desk, and which he had just been revising. I calculated that half of the author's original work was allowed to stand; the other half was the work of Charles Dickens."

"And so, by degrees, you became a well-known author?" I remarked, getting Mr. Fenn back to the subject in hand.

"Well," he replied, glancing at the shelves containing his own books, "by degrees I wrote

a hundred novels and fifty books for boys, so I haven't wasted much time, you see."

Mr. Fenn's first boys' book was written in 1866 for the *Boys' Newspaper*, and was named

"THE MOST EXACTING EDITOR I EVER KNEW WAS CHARLES DICKENS."

"Hollowdell Grange; or, Holiday Hours in a Country House." He wrote it to oblige the editor, an old friend, and its success meant good fortune to thousands and thousands of boys in the present day. Musing upon the happy hours I had spent over his works, it occurred to me to ask Mr. Fenn how many volumes of different kinds he had in his possession.

"Twenty-five thousand," was the startling reply. "I've got a way of picking them up. There are about five thousand, I suppose, in this room, and they run all over the house."

"Well," I said, "it isn't every day that one visits a private house containing twenty-five thousand books. May I see some more of them?"

"Certainly; come along. There are a few here, you see, in the hall. More on this landing. Now we come to what I call the back library. This room is devoted to plays."

"Plays?" I echoed in amazement. "Why, how many are there here?"

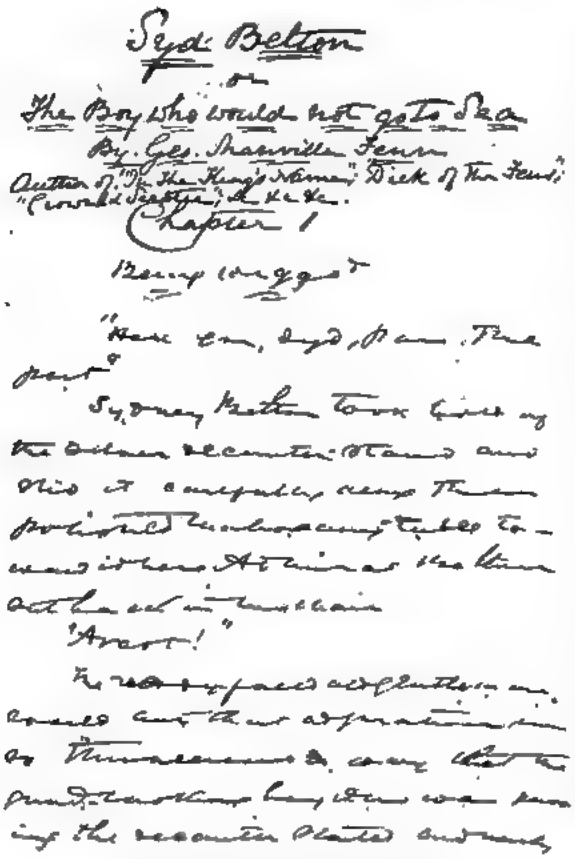
"Five thousand volumes," said the owner calmly. "You see," he added, taking pity on my amazement, "in days gone by everyone who wrote at all wrote plays. It doesn't follow that they were all acted, or worth acting, but, such as they were, I've collected 'em."

"I suppose there are some very rare editions here?"

"Some, certainly. Here are Nathaniel Lee's works, dated 1694. Look at the curious old print and binding. Then I have——"

"Any more rooms?" I interrupted, thinking of a certain engagement I had in the evening.

"Oh, yes. Here's the room I used to work in during the summer. Nice and pleasant, isn't it? One window looks over my own garden —that's the old mulberry tree—and the other on to the Duke of Northumberland's private



FIRST PAGE OF ONE OF MR. FENN'S STORIES.

grounds. You wouldn't know you were so near London, would you?"

And then we fell to talking on men and things, and I discovered that Mr. Manville Fenn was a shrewd critic as well as a popular author.

"Thomas Hardy," he said, "is a great writer. He writes of what he knows himself and has seen—he doesn't get it out of books. But his women are all of one type, and his tone is very gloomy. Then there's Anthony Hope. It struck me when I read the 'Prisoner of Zenda" that he ought to write for the stage. His work is full of dramatic situations. Now, who else is there?"

"Seton Merriman," I suggested.

"A capital writer. Sharp, clear-cut, telling. Yes," continued Mr. Fenn, "there are plenty of good men, and more coming on. But now let's have some tea."

"Do you work on tea?" I asked, as we went downstairs to the drawing-room.

"I work on nothing," said the man of one hundred and fifty books. "I drink tea, but not to make the brain act. I write in the morning and at night, but never in the afternoon. Smoke? Yes, I smoke, but not when I am at work. I find the smoke gets in my eyes."

"And how do you work—regularly?"

"If possible, but I don't force myself. If I write at all, I must write quickly. Otherwise, I know I am not in the vein, and put the pen down."

"Talking of work," I said, "how much work do you think a boy ought to do?"

"Well," said the author, "that's a hard question; but, if I had a school, I would make the boys do an hour before breakfast, four hours before dinner, and then play for the rest of the day."

"I hardly think it would answer," I replied; "and I hardly think the boys themselves would like it. But let me ask one more question. What advice would you give to boys generally as a rule of life?"

"I would tell them," said Manville Fenn, "not to be priggish; to do their level best, and, in short, to be MANLY."

And nobody could give better advice than that, could they?

MR. MANVILLE FENN IN 1870.

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RUGBY XV.

CHRISTMAS.

Some say, that ever 'gainst that season comes
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
This bird of dawning singeth all night long;
And then they say no spirit dares stir abroad;
The nights are wholesome; then no planets strike,
No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,
So hallow'd and so gracious is the time.

SHAKESPEARE.

∴ ∴ ∴

I heard the bells on Christmas Day
Their old familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet,
The words repeat,
Of peace on earth, goodwill to men!

Then peal'd the bells more loud and deep
"God is not dead, nor doth he sleep!
The Wrong shall fail,
The Right prevail,
With peace on earth, goodwill to men!"

LONGFELLOW.

∴ ∴ ∴

Ye who have scorn'd each other,
Or injured friend or brother,
In this fast fading year;
Ye who, by word or deed,
Have made a kind heart bleed,
Come gather here!
Let sinn'd against, and sinning,
Forget their strife's beginning,
And join in friendship now,
Be links no longer broken,
Be sweet forgiveness spoken
Under the holly bough.

MACKAY.

∴ ∴ ∴

Christmas comes! He comes, he comes,
Ushered with a rain of plums,
Hollies in the windows greet him,
Schools come driving post to meet him,
Gifts precede him, bells proclaim him,
Every mouth delights to name him.
Wet, and cold, and wind, and dark,
Make him but the warmer mark.

LEIGH HUNT.

∴ ∴ ∴

Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the new-born King!
Peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!"

CHAS. WESLEY.

This is the month, and this the happy morn
Wherein the sun of Heaven's Eternal King,
Of wedded maid and virgin mother born,
Our great redemption from above did bring

MILTON.

∴ ∴ ∴

England was merry England, when
Old Christmas brought his sports again.
'Twas Christmas broached the mightiest ale;
'Twas Christmas told the merriest tale;
A Christmas gambol oft could cheer
The poor man's heart through half the year.

SCOTT.

∴ ∴ ∴

Bright and blessed is the time,
Sorrows end and joys begin,
While the bells with merry chime
Ring the Day of Plenty in!
But the happy tide to hail,
With a sigh or with a tear,
Heigho!
I hardly know—
Christmas comes but once a year!

HOOD.

∴ ∴ ∴

While from every tower and steeple,
Pealing bells were sounding clear
(Never with such tones of gladness,
Save when Christmas time is near).
Many a one that night was merry,
Who had toiled through all the year.

A. A. PROCTER.

∴ ∴ ∴

In December ring,
Every day the chimes;
Loud the gleemen sing
In the streets their merry rhymes.
Let us by the fire,
Ever higher,
Sing them till the night expire.

Nuns in frigid cells,
At this holy tide,
For want of something else
Christmas songs at times have tried;
Let us by the fire,
Ever higher,
Sing them till the night expire.

LONGFELLOW (a translation).

THE LAKE OF THE LOST SPIRITS.

By W. Pilgrim Hodgson.

By John Mackie.

Author of "They that Sit in Darkness," "The Last Creek," "Touch and Go," etc.

Illustrated by Stewart Browne.

SYNOPSIS.—(Chapters I.—IX.)

Walter Derringham, an orphan, runs away from home, leaving behind him his one friend in the world, Muriel Wray. On arriving in London, Walter chases and captures a pickpocket who has stolen a gold watch from a gentleman in evening dress. The gentleman proves to be a Canadian cattle-farmer, Mr. Dunbar, who offers Walter a crib on his ranche in the wild North-West prairie country. Walter accepts the offer and accompanies Mr. Dunbar to Canada. Nearing the ranche, whilst passing through a valley, the party is attacked by hostile Indians. Dunbar and Derringham, after a savage encounter with the red men, obtain the assistance of a neighbouring rancher and his cow-boys and also that of the mounted police. After various tactics have been employed by both sides, one Indian is captured, but the notorious outlaw, "Make-Thunder," escapes. Derringham accompanies Dunbar to the latter's ranche, and settles down to his work. One Sunday, Derringham goes off with Broncho Pete—a cow-boy—to explore a mysterious locality in that neighbourhood known as the Land of the Lost Spirits—this being the place, according to the superstitions of the red men, to which "bad" Indians are consigned when they die.

CHAPTER X.

IN THE LAND OF THE LOST SPIRITS.

It was as if we had found our way into another world, and that a weird one, for when we had scrambled out of the deep, bracken-lined, pine-shrouded ravine, the trees and plants, and even the formation of the country, were quite different from anything we had ever seen before. There were giant trees of spruce and pine everywhere, and a medley of strangely fashioned boulders piled one atop of the other in the most fantastic manner possible. We ascended a long, narrow ridge that the rancher had told us to look out for, and had a good look around before starting on our journey west. There to the east, in the direction in which we had come, was the brink of the great precipice, with here and there a gaunt, scraggy pine, either dying or dead, leaning in a sickeningly perilous fashion over the nightmarish depths below.

In some places the ridge we walked on was so broad that two or three coaches could have driven along it abreast. At other places it became so narrow that it put me in mind of walking upon the top of a wall.

Pete, who was unaccustomed to walking, was limping on ahead valiantly—he would have died rather than give precedence to me—when suddenly he turned, signing to me to crouch and approach with caution. Wonderingly I did so, and reached the rock behind which he had ensconced himself.

"Look thar," he observed, with a look of animation in his dark eyes, pointing to something in the hollow. "Isn't it a purty sight?"

I looked, and I confess the "purtiness" of the sight made my heart leap into my mouth, and set me for the moment wishing that I was anywhere but in that neighbourhood. Climbing the opposite side of the hollow was an immense cinnamon bear—a bear which is so large and fierce that it is often confounded with the grizzly—with two cubs following close at her heels. I knew only too well that a she-bear with her young was one of the most dangerous animals to meet under the sun. We would not have the ghost of a chance to escape from her rage if once she smelt or sighted us. I wondered what Broncho Pete seemed to find amusing in the situation. He took up a stone about the size of a cricket ball and poised it for a moment in his hand. What on earth did he

THE OLD LADY HERSELF AT THAT VERY MOMENT POKED HER NOSE ROUND THE CORNER OF THE LEDGE.

intend doing? Was the man mad that he was thus going to reveal our presence to the fierce brute?

Before I could stop him he had hurled the stone fairly at the bear, and struck her sharply on the hind-quarters. Then something happened which even now as I write makes me laugh, although I could not but think at the time that it was a mean trick to serve Mrs. Brum and her young ones. In all probability this bear had never seen a human being in her life, so, not taking any foreign intruder into her calculations, she naturally supposed that one of the cubs was forgetting itself, and playing a little practical joke upon her all on its own account. It was an occasion for prompt reprisal. She turned quickly, and not knowing which of them was the probable culprit—they both looked so very innocent—she gave each of the surprised youngsters such a sounding smack on the side of the head with a brawny fore-paw that they were knocked head over heels and rolled to the bottom of the hollow. We promptly ducked at the same moment, but Pete seemed so tickled over the success of his little joke that, to my horror, he fairly exploded with laughter, and rolled over on his back. I shook him in annoyance and dismay, and, quite forgetting that my own voice was just as audible as his laughter, I cried :—

"Pete! I say, Pete, you silly ass, can't you keep quiet? If you don't we'll have the old bear on to us, and then we'll be in a jolly nice fix. I say—now then—get up, for goodness sake, man!" And I shook him again in order to bring him to his senses.

"Fancied it was the young 'uns!" he gasped between his bursts of laughter. "Great Cæsar! if that old bear ain't a caution! She——"

But he did not finish his sentence, for the old lady herself at that very moment poked her nose round the corner of the ledge, and stood within a few paces of us, the cubs bringing up the rear, but at a more respectful distance than they had hitherto observed. The change of expression on Pete's face was ludicrous in the extreme; still even then, with the huge fierce brute looking at us, and probably unconscious of the real state of affairs, I could not help laughing. Pete sprang to his feet, seized the Winchester, and, facing the bear, cried :—

"Git up a tree, partner, just as slippery as you like. I'll stand the old lady off."

"Then you get up one, too," I rejoined, and turned to obey his orders with all possible despatch. But just at that moment Mrs. Bruin stood upright on her hind legs, and with great ungainly strides came towards us.

"Keep off, you old fool!" cried Pete, with a coolness for which I had hardly given him credit. "I don't want to use force to a lady, 'specially when she's got sich an int'risting family, but—now then, not an inch farder, please!"

Nine men out of ten would have fired at the

bear then and there, but under the circumstances Pete did not care to shoot. He understood bears by reason of a long experience with them. I was just preparing to climb a pine tree, when, fearing that Pete was taking uncalled-for risks by his tender-heartedness, I turned and caught up what once before had stood me in good stead—a stone half as large as my head. I had heard that a judicious poke in the ribs will double up the biggest bear that walks. With this stone I would double up Mrs. Bruin. It was an ungallant action, I admit, but there was nothing else for it. In another moment I had done it, and, with a hoarse growl, the bear fairly hugged herself with dismay, and came down on her knees. I turned my attention to the tree, and cried to Pete to make himself scarce also.

But a bear is one of the most knowing creatures under the sun, and it had no intention of letting me escape so easily. Before I had got three feet from the ground Mrs. Bruin had recovered herself and made a dash at me. I swung my feet clear of her great claws just at the same moment as there was a flash and a roar, and she spun round swiftly, snapping at an unget-at-able part of her body. The bullet had only stung her up a little, and embedded itself harmlessly in a thick layer of fat. I looked at my companion as I swarmed up my particular pine, and saw with satisfaction that he was preparing to follow my example. But the bear turned her attention to Pete, and made a rush in upon him. With an agility that did the cow-boy infinite credit he put the tree between himself and the bear, and watched her narrowly. There was no time to put the rifle to his shoulder and fire. Suddenly, and before the bear could divine his intentions, he had sprung into the air, caught a branch over his head, and was pulling himself up. The bear arrived just in time to grip the stock of his rifle. She pulled it from his hand, and then favoured us with a little exhibition of a bear's strength when it is inclined to be nasty. Mrs. Bruin caught the barrel between her great jaws, and with one great lever-like paw gripping the stock, and another gripping the muzzle, she snapped and doubled up the rifle as if it had been made of *papier-maché*. Pete's rifle was now, as he himself ruefully described it, "an ilygint wreck."

"Bad luck to you!" he cried, looking down with disgust and chagrin depicted on his face, and addressing the bear. "If I'd suspected as how you couldn't take a joke, I'm blowed if I'd have played with you, that's all!"

When Mrs. Bruin had crunched up the rifle into something unrecognisable her feelings seemed relieved. She leisurely made for the foot of the tree which contained Pete, and gazed upon him with her small, cunning, dark eyes in a way that was irresistibly comical. She seemed to ask him which of the two had the best of the joke now.

As for the cubs, they came to the foot of my tree, and went through quite a nice little acrobatic performance as if for my special benefit. Queer little creatures they were, looking for all the world like animated balls of fur. They gambolled and rolled over each other like puppy-dogs amusing themselves, every now and again pausing to look up at me with sly side-glances. I verily

SHE SNAPPED AND DOUBLED UP THE RIFLE AS IF IT HAD BEEN MADE OF PAPIER-MACHÉ.

believe they wanted me to come down and play with them. To tell the truth, I would have liked nothing better, but I was afraid that their mother might object to their playing with other children, so stayed where I was. When I looked at them and then at the broken gun, I thought it was a great pity that bears ever grew up at all. However, Mrs. Bruin evidently did not care about wasting her time at the foot of trees which she could not climb, so a few minutes later she trotted off in a southerly direction, trying to look as if she had an appointment to keep, the cubs reluctantly following her.

"S'long!" yelled Broncho Pete after their retreating forms, and kissing his hand. "Sorry you couldn't stop to dinner. Guess your old man don't git fooling round you much."

We got down from our trees.

"Pete," I ventured, "let's bar bears next time."

"You bet, boss," he remarked sadly, with a wan smile playing upon his thoughtful countenance.

We were now utterly without firearms; the only weapons we had were the knives in our belts. As the bears had evidently gone for good, there was nothing to fear on their account; but, strangely enough, as we pursued our way eastward my fancy converted more than one blackened rock and tree-stump into something that looked very like a bear.

At last we lost the friendly ridge altogether, and continued our journey over some of the roughest country I ever had the ill luck to tackle. We clambered over rocks, and forced our way through thorny undergrowth until our clothes were only fit for the ragman. At last, when we had begun to think that somehow we must have gone astray, we came to an untimbered ridge running north and south. Ascending it, we came upon one of the most remarkable scenes it was ever my lot to witness. It was the Lake of the Lost Spirits!

We stood on the brink of a mighty encompassing cliff that fell sheer away without a break for 400ft. and more, and at the foot of it lay the still waters gleaming coldly in the sunlight like a great band of burnished silver. With a lordly, crescent-shaped sweep, it stretched out and on to the far south-west until a great, dun-coloured precipice, streaked fantastically here and there with dull furtive reds and glaring yellows, cut it off from our sight. Away to the north it opened out and assumed the form of a bay, thickly studded with wooded islands. But always hemming it in there were those stern, inviolable cliffs, crested with giant sombre pines. But perhaps the most uncanny feature of this weird, isolated scene was the utter stillness that prevailed; it was a silence which suggested that of the grave. There was no song of bird or sound of rill in that wild spot—it might have been a landscape in some dead planet whirling in illimitable space.

"No wonder the Injuns won't come within miles of this place," remarked Broncho Pete after a pause. "Hark! what was that? I'm blessed if it didn't sound like a gun!"

"Nonsense!" I exclaimed. "There's not a living soul nearer than the camp, and that's four miles off at least."

Nevertheless, I had heard something, but ascribed it to some loose rock falling from the cliff into the lake.

We followed the edge of the cliff round to the north for over a mile, and came to a place where it was possible with care to descend to the beach below. We had halted and were scrutinising the steep, broken slope, when Broncho Pete suddenly seized me by the arm, and, pointing to a little cove far below, whispered:—

"Do you see anything down thar?"

I looked keenly for a minute or two before replying.

"Yes, I do," I said. "I believe I see a boat!"

CHAPTER XI.

A MYSTERY REVEALED.

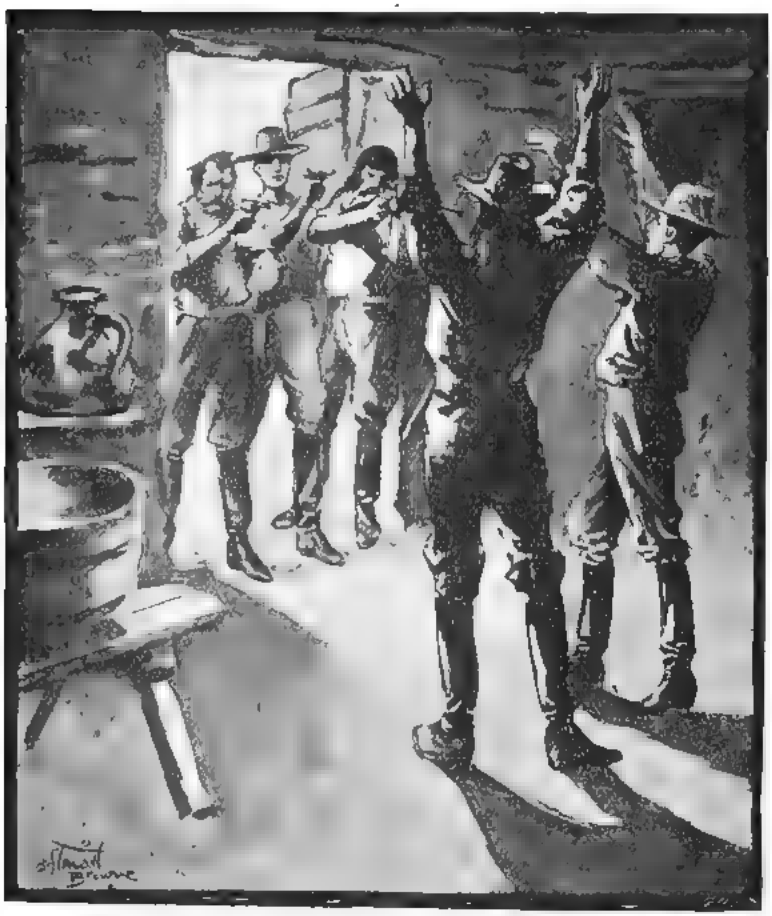
A boat!—how could there possibly be a boat on the Lake of the Lost Spirits, a place practically inaccessible to the outside world, hidden away in one of the wildest spots in the Great Lone Land; the very existence of which, indeed, was doubted by many? Had there been any white men in that part of the country for any length of time, the rancher or the police would surely have heard of them.

But a boat it was, and that a goodly-sized one; we could even see the oars lying across the seats from where we were. It was only by the merest chance that we had caught sight of it, for being moored behind a projecting rock it could not be seen from any other point. Our astonishment on seeing such a proof of occupation was just as great as if we had suddenly come upon a party of Cockney picnickers among the rocks.

"I guess we'll go and investigate," said Pete.

We had to exercise considerable caution descending the so-called shelving terrace, for at times it was so steep that the slightest slip would have precipitated us into the yawning depths below. At last we stood on the rocks alongside the boat, the painter of which was simply slipped over a narrow, upright boulder.

We decided to continue our exploring in the



"PUT UP YOUR HANDS, OR WE'LL BLOW YOU BOTH INTO LITTLE BITS!"

boat, so we took our seats. The oars were rather heavy, but I had always been fond of rowing, and on that still, calm surface it was not difficult to make headway.

We made for the largest of the islands.

In a few minutes we were in a tiny bay, with steep, gravelly shores. To our astonishment we found a small landing-stage and a number of empty cases lying about. We made fast the boat and followed a small footpath that led up into a thicket of pine. Then all unexpectedly we came upon a small, circular hollow, and in the centre of it a collection of log-huts with sod-roofs. From the rude chimney of one, smoke was issuing. I caught myself rubbing my eyes in astonishment, for to find such signs of human habitation in a place that was supposed to be the headquarters of the Indians' ghost-world was something for which no one could expect to be prepared. Pete gripped me by the arm.

"Let's go back," he said. "I don't quite like the look of things! 'Pears to me that's summat fishy 'bout all this. If I had only my shootin'-stick now it might be different."

But I pointed out to him that there was evidently no one on the premises—the owners were, doubtless, on the mainland. Seeing we had their boat, there could be no harm in having a peep into that shed, since we were here.

Somewhat reluctantly Pete consented, and we walked over towards the building in question. It was of such ample proportions, and so peculiarly black and grimy, that instinctively I divined it was used for purposes other than human habitation. I looked at Pete; and he looked at me. There was an odd grin upon his face, and he winked his active-service eye. We entered by the low doorway, and the minute we did so I knew we stood in the bothy of whiskey smugglers and illicit distillers. A large copper still stood on a raised stone platform in the middle of the room, and all around were bags of raw sugar, kegs of molasses, and others that evidently contained raw spirit. On shelves ranged round the walls were two-gallon stone jars, which we afterwards learned contained spirits that had been smuggled in from the States, while on the earthen floor various large tubs were scattered about in various stages of use, indicating, as Pete hurriedly whispered, that preparations were being made for an early brew. Indeed, in a small furnace a fire had evidently been only recently lit. In short, all the necessary requisites and appurtenances of the distiller's trade were here gathered together before our eyes.

We realised that we had solved the mystery that had baffled the authorities and the mounted police so long—the main source from which the constant supply of smuggled and illicit spirits came that flooded that part of the province. Here was the smugglers' headquarters, but where were the smugglers? We rightly guessed that if they had all gone ashore it was only for a very short

time, for on a bench lay one or two articles of wearing apparel, as if they had but recently been cast off.

"Pete," I exclaimed, "it's easy enough now to understand what the police inspector said to Mr. Dunbar about the smuggling mystery. This is the half-way house and hiding-place of the smugglers between the United States and the belt of civilisation alongside the Canadian Pacific Railway line."

"Thet's so," observed Pete, "and that boat must take the goods from one end of the lake to the other, where you can bet they've got some secret passages in and out of their own. But I guess the sooner we get out of this the better. If any of them should happen to catch us here they'll pot us, sure as little apples."

"What! Shoot us?" I exclaimed in some surprise. "What would they want to do that for?"

"Waal, you air jest green!" was the cool explanation. "Do you suppose for one single second thet these 'ere crooks er going to show us perlitely back to the camp so's to let us blow the gaff on them! Waal, you do take the cake! Come on—let's clear."

"*Just one mom·nt, please. But first put up your hands, or we'll blow you both into little bits before you can say Jack Robinson!*"

We wheeled round in consternation on hearing these words, which were uttered in a hard, dry voice. And there, standing in the doorway, were three men, each of them looking at us from behind a rifle or revolver!

CHAPTER XII.

A GRIM ALTERNATIVE.

THE three men who stood in the doorway with their respective weapons levelled straight at our heads were desperate-looking customers. They were all in their shirt-sleeves, and two of them were bareheaded. They were not unlike cowboys, only there was a determined and wideawake look about them that hinted at the dangerous nature of their calling. The third man, who had acted as spokesman to the party, and was evidently the leader of the gang, filled me at once with wonder and aversion. He was tall, clean-shaven, pale, and put me for all the world in mind of a priest. His cold, grey eyes were inscrutable, but there was determination and something very like asceticism in the indrawing of his hollow cheeks and the firm set of his thin lips. He wore his pale-brown hair rather short, and there was a hint of intellect and cold-bloodedness about him that plainly denoted he was not to be trifled with. To look into his keen, calm eyes was to recognise a master spirit.

With something like an exclamation of disgust Broncho Pete raised his hands above his head. But still, he took the whole affair so coolly, and so much as a matter of course, that I concluded it was not the first time he had been by force of circumstances compelled to perform the same feat. I was more surprised in another minute on discovering that the tall, ascetic leader of the gang had been recognised by my companion.

"Campbell," said Broncho Pete, "guess as how you've got the drop on me this time. Now that you hev got it, what's your little game?"

"Before I can answer that we'll have to tot up old scores. I don't forget you were on the Vigilant Committee that time on the diggings in Deadhorse Gulch when I and a few more of the boys had to quit in the dead of winter, and just when we were making a tidy little pile. Yes, I think I owe you something for that, Broncho!" and the ascetic one smiled in an evil fashion.

"Yes, thet's so—I remember," coolly rejoined Pete. "You were as crooked a lot of purfessional rooks as ever used marked cards or loaded dice. I don't mean to say that some o' them who played with you weren't quite as bad as yerselves an' didn't deserve to be took in, but you were a tough crowd, and if you kin rekelect, it was lucky for you they didn't lynch you over that Simons racket. If it hadn't been for me you'd have got strung up, and you owe me something for that, Mr. Man!"

"Jim," said Campbell, turning to one of his followers, "keep Broncho Pete covered with your shooting-iron and blow his blooming head off if he moves a finger. Bill, you give me your revolver and secure that cub. Tie his hands behind his back with that piece of rope you see in the corner."

Quicker than it takes to write it, the man called Bill had handed over his revolver to his chief, picked up the rope, and prepared to seize me.

"Now thin, you young whipper-snapper, just give us your paws, will you?' And Bill, catching me by the nape of the neck, twisted me round before I could quite make up my mind as to whether he really meant to use force or not.

I admit I did wrong in losing my temper. Had I only remained quiet it is unlikely that they would have attempted any further violence. As it was, Bill's sharp, humiliating action fairly took me by surprise, but with a sudden wrench I freed myself and struck out with both fists. As I stood on the defensive expecting him to seize me, he suddenly raised his hand with the rope in it and bringing it down sharply, I realised that I was lassoed;

the noose settled down over my shoulders. There was a sharp, unexpected jerk, and my arms were pinioned firmly to my sides. Another jerk, and I found myself lying face downwards on the earthen floor. A twist of the rope, and it was obvious to me that I was securely bound and utterly powerless. I was chafing with rage, but realised that I had brought it all upon myself. It was a lesson I was not likely to forget for many a long day.

"Now then," remarked the ascetic one, "lay him across that bench and give him twenty with the rope's end. Youngsters who don't give in quietly want to be taught how to"

Before I could wriggle clear of them, Bill and the other ruffian picked me up and placed me across the bench. I kicked out with my feet; in another minute they also were made fast. It was an awkward predicament to be in, so awkward indeed that someone had to hold my legs to keep me in position. Being face downwards, it was impossible to see what preparations were being made for my punishment. It was not long before those preparations were made plain enough to me.

SWISH! AND THE BITTER END OF A ROPE DESCENDED ON MY BACK WITH NO SLIGHT FORCE.

Swish! and the bitter end of a rope descended on my back with no slight force. The pain was terrible, and though my first impulse was to cry out, by a strong effort of will I kept silence.

"One," sang out Bill with unction.

Swish! Again the rope descended, and this time it was as if the hemp were cutting into my flesh. It was more than I could bear, and something like a groan escaped from my lips.

"*Two!*" cried Bill again.

I awaited with dread cut number three, and thought it must surely knock all the life out of me. But there was an interruption, and I realised that it was Broncho Pete who spoke.

"Campbell," he cried, "for God's sake stop! You hev got down low. I've known you to do many a shady thing, but I'm blest if I thought you'd condescend to revenge yourself on a youngster."

Again the rope descended, and it seemed to me as if I must faint with the pain. As it was I could only moan feebly.

"*Three!*" cried the ghoulish Bill, with a ring of satisfaction in his voice.

"Oh, you infernal coward!" gasped Pete. "Why can't you flog me, as is tough and can stand it? And I suppose you call yourselves men?"

"Shut up, Broncho," said Campbell, "or I'll bore a hole in your thick skull! You can lay off now, Bill," he concluded.

So they unbound me, but so great was the pain of the cuts, and the unnatural, cramped position I had occupied, that it was as much as I could do to stand upright.

"Well," asked Pete, "what now? Better row us ashore again, and I'll guarantee we'll not split."

"There's an old saying," grimly remarked Campbell, "that 'Dead men tell no tales.'"

"Phaw!" snorted Pete; "what're ye givin' us? You've got queer ideas of satisfaction. Do you think it 'ud be worth the facin' of a brand-new wooden scaffold behind the barracks at Regina, and a drop of six feet."

For a second—only for a second—I thought a sudden flash of fear came into the desperado's eyes, and for the first time he lost his apparently indifferent manner.

"Shut up, you fool! If you keep jawing me like that, Pete, I'll give you an ounce of lead right now," he cried angrily.

He paused for a moment as if considering, then, in a determined but somewhat calmer manner, said deliberately:—

"Now look here, you two jokers! We're wastin' time, and time's valuable to us just at present. We've got to put through another brew in a few minutes, and must come to an understanding. You'll admit that when you came here it was on your own invitation. You ran your own heads into this bees' nest. Of course, it's not likely we're going to be such fools as to row you ashore again. You stole that boat from my mates, by the way, and they'll have a bone to pick with you when they get here. You'd only blow the gaff upon us. Oh no, I'm not taking any man's word. You know what the Scriptures say: 'All men are liars.'"

He paused, and smiled upon us, as if he were merely imparting some humorous information to boon companions. His reference to the Scriptures, and his obvious callousness, made my blood run cold, despite my efforts to keep quiet. He continued:—

"There's only one way out for you, and that's to join us. You won't be asked to do any of the risky night work on the prairie—running our supplies and commodities in and out. That's for us old hands. But you can have a jolly good time here if you want to. You can have all the booze you want in moderation, Broncho; we live like fighting cocks, and the youngster here can have all the literature he wants from Fort Benton or the cars on the C.P.R. This island's eight acres in extent, and is big enough to hold us all; there's good shooting and fishing, and, besides, there's money in the business. Eighteen months at this game, and I'll guarantee you £1,500 apiece. Intend to quit the game in that time myself, and going down south. You'll not make that in ten years on the ranche, Broncho. As for you, young man"—he looked at me with less of vindictiveness in his eyes, and spoke pleasantly enough—"I guess you've got to make your way in the world, and it's one chance in a thousand for you. To have fifteen hundred pounds at the end of eighteen months to go into civilisation with, and to start yourself in some good-going business, is not to be sneezed at. Now then, Pete," he concluded, "what do you think of it?"

"If I say 'no' for both of us, what then?" asked the cow-boy, quietly.

"Well, I'm not quite sure," replied Campbell, with that curious pursing of his lips again; "but you can hardly expect us to hamper ourselves with you. We've got the drop on you, and there's the lake," he concluded, significantly.

Then I saw for the first time in my life how under an eccentric manner, and rough exterior, the soul of true nobility can burn. Pete threw one arm over my shoulder, and, with a flush on his rugged, sun-browned face, exclaimed:—

"Let me speak for us both, Wally, my boy. I've lived longer in the world than you, and I know what I say is right. Campbell, a clear conscience and our honour is worth more to us than your money. We will have none of it! Shoot us down if you dare, but remember there is a God who will call you to account if man does not."

CHAPTER XIII.

A MAD SMUGGLER.

It is difficult to know what the desperado would have done had not at that very moment a couple of rifle shots rung out in the far distance. Such a remarkable series of echoes followed close upon them that one could have imagined the island was being bombarded from every point of the compass. Campbell listened attentively.

"It's the boys," he remarked, turning to his rough-looking mates; "they've missed their boat, and are signalling to us. Bill, you'd better take the boat across to them and pick them up. Tell them we've got visitors who took the loan of the dinghy."

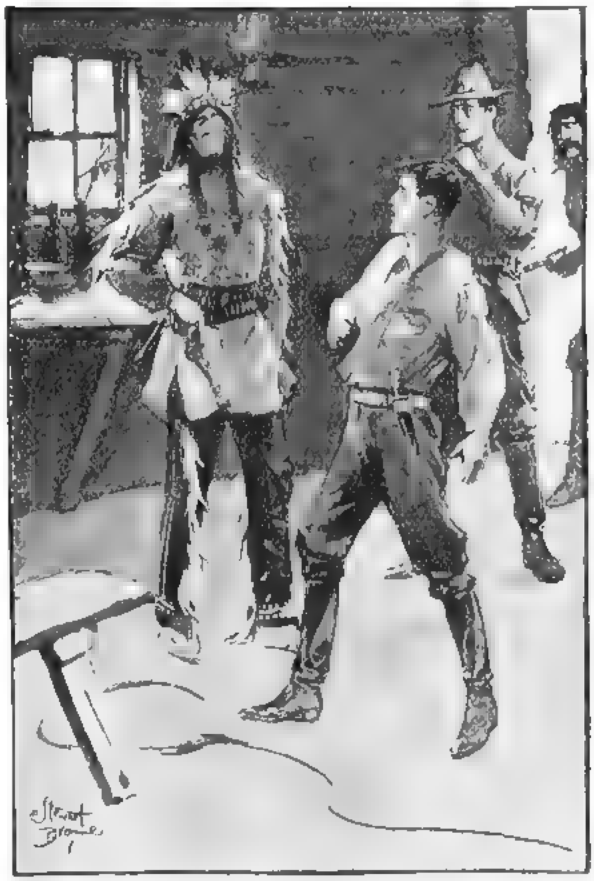
Bill disappeared, and I breathed more freely. It seemed as if we were to have a respite. Campbell turned his attention to us again.

"On second thoughts," he said, "I'll not give the fishes in the lake a treat just yet. You may come to take a more sensible view of the situation after a bit."

Half-an-hour elapsed before the boat appeared. In it were four white men and an Indian. They jumped ashore and came up the narrow path, while Bill took the boat round to the little natural harbour among the rocks. They had evidently been on an expedition to replenish their larder, for slung on a pole, which two of them bore upon their shoulders, was a splendid black-tail deer. Another carried several brace of prairie chickens. They came into the hollow, and entered the building.

Instinctively I scrutinised them to see if there would be a grain of mercy thrown on the scales in our favour when our court-martial came off. Two of them were ordinary looking men, of good physique and self-possessed, so different from the cow-boy one may meet on the prairie at any time,

only theirs was that look of keenness and resource that one may see in the faces of those who have been accustomed to carry their lives in their hands. The third white man made me more hopeful. He could not have been more than four-and-twenty years of age, and was, upon the whole, a rather good-looking fellow. When his bright brown eyes rested upon me for the moment it struck me that there was a mute greeting in them, and that he looked rather sorry to see us in such a position. The others called him "Alan." But it was the Indian who took me by surprise. As soon as my eyes rested on his face it seemed as if my blood ran cold. It was Make-Thunder, the red-skin who had shot at Colin Dunbar and myself in the valley on our way out to the ranche, and who had escaped so cleverly from the clutches of the Mounted Police! There was no mistaking him; his was the high aquiline nose, the hawk-like, proud glance, and the lithe, athletic figure. But, sure sign of all, he instantly recognised me.



IT WAS MAKE-THUNDER, THE REDSKIN WHO HAD SHOT AT COLIN DUNBAR AND MYSELF.

"Ough, ough!" he exclaimed, grinning down upon me in a way that made me feel decidedly uncomfortable.

"You two seem to have met before," remarked Campbell, whose sharp eyes missed nothing.

"Oh, yees, by gar! We bin meet way back yondaire," glibly explained the Indian, to my no little astonishment. "He try keel me, an' maybe so I try keel him."

"Hello!" exclaimed Campbell, who with the others now stood a few paces off watching us; "this is interesting. How did he do it, Make-Thunder?"

"Ough! I was near forget now. Eet was in Fish Creek Coullee, an' I was look out black-tail deer to take to tepee when nudder man Dunbar and dis boy come up 'long trail. I shoot pony b'longing to dis boy, an' den nudder man he keel Crooked-legs who look out pony b'longing to Enjun and take dem 'way. Dis boy I was see 'im peek up stone an' trow it at Crooked-legs firs' time. Nex' day Shermoganish-peleece, she was come out an' come down coullee. But you bet my medicine she goot, I was lay low 'longa rock lak as wile cat. Den I come out on to de prairie all same as peleece scout, an' peleece she no know. But dees boy she see me an' make big pow-wow an' geet hees gun. I catch pony an' ride 'way. Eet was de bes' pony I evaire have, by-gar! Dis boy he chase me lak he chase buffalo, an' one time he shoot, but he mees; den I shoot, an' I was mees. Den I clear out, an' was come here, by-gar!"

Then for the first time I heard Campbell laugh. Something in that hard, soulless cackle startled me. It was not the laugh of a sane man.

"Well, young fellow," remarked Campbell, when he had relieved his feelings, "it seems you're a bit of a terror, but it's only what I would have expected from you. Now, I've got an idea. I owe that chap Dunbar a grudge; he's too enterprising by half, and more than once he's been perilously close to our trail. He wants warning off. Do you know what the brigands do in Corsica and other lively places when they want the friends of captives to hurry up with a ransom? No? I'll tell you. They just slice off a part of the captive's ear, or chop off a finger, and send it through the post to his relatives with the intimation that delays are dangerous, and that generally makes them hurry up. Now, if we sent something of the sort with an intimation to the rancher to keep at

a distance, I fancy Colin Dunbar would lay low and not trouble us."

Again he laughed, and for the first time I noticed that the others exchanged furtive and significant glances. Pete gave me a sharp nudge with his elbow, as if to enjoin silence. For a minute there was a painful stillness. It was Alan who first spoke, and he did so without looking at me, and as if the subject were a matter of indifference to him.

"That's all very well, boss," he said, "and wouldn't be a bad idea if it were practicable, but it ain't, and would simply mean Stony Mountain Penitentiary, and Sing-Sing afterwards, for every mother's son of us."

I looked up into his face gratefully; I had thought the man had the feelings of a human being from the first. But he would not look at me, and I thought I divined the reason. Two of the other men seemed to consider Alan's speech favourably. Campbell seemed to be pondering over the matter. Suddenly he said:—

"I'll tell you what, boys, we'll settle their fate with the dice. There's nothing like a little gamble now and again."

He left the building, and the others followed him.

To me the next ten minutes seemed an eternity. The cow-boy sat with his arm passed through mine, but neither of us spoke a word. Where were all my bright dreams for the future now? Was it not an odd fate for an English boy only fresh from a public school, to have an ounce of lead, or imprisonment in a lonely island with a gang of desperadoes, hanging over his head? But my life had not been a particularly happy one. My uncle Gilbert Derringham had at one time been kind to me, and there were some other boys at Harrow whom I liked immensely. The girl Muriel Wray was surely the one human being of whom I had the brightest memories; after her came the rancher, Colin Dunbar, and my present companion.

Just then Alan entered the room, and handed two pieces of paper to Jim. I thought he whispered something in his ear, and the latter nodded his head. I could hear the murmuring of voices come indistinctly from an adjoining room. Were they never going to decide upon our fate? The delay in itself was a living death.

Then Campbell, the smuggler, entered the room, and stood in front of us.

CHAPTER XIV.

A STRANGE PRISON.

"Well, gentlemen, I've come to tell you that you've got some little time to put in yet in this miserable vale of tears," drawled the gentleman smuggler chief, as if he hardly expected that the matter would interest us. "And I may as well tell you, by the way, that you just escaped the fishes by the skin of your teeth. The throws were even, so we let Make-Thunder chip in. We said we'd let him decide about you, and the noble savage said that unless we were prepared to torture you—crucifixion, or fire, or something of that nature—he elected to bide his time, and operate upon you in a tonsorial way—scalping, I fancy he meant—when opportunity offered in fair fight. There's no accounting for the tastes of some people, especially bad Indians."

He addressed us in such a communicative and friendly fashion that, but for the cold-blooded import of his words, one would have imagined he was the best friend we had. The others now returned to the still-room, and the strange being continued:—

"Now," he said, "I want you clearly to understand your position here. I can't exactly say how long circumstances will oblige us to avail ourselves of your services, but one thing is certain that until things get too hot you've got to keep us company. You'll be allowed a good deal of liberty, and will live just the same as we do ourselves, but remember, an attempt at escape means instant death." He turned to the others: "You hear, boys, an ounce of lead apiece if you find them up to any monkey tricks, a four-bushel bag with a big stone in it, row them a mile or two out into the Lake of the Lost Spirits, close to where the outlet pierces the mountain, and there'll be no chance of them spoiling the water for domestic purposes. Jim, you keep an eye on them to-day until we make more definite arrangements. Now then, let's have dinner, for I feel rather peckish. Broncho, and Master—er—?"

"Derringham," I said.

"Well, Master Derringham, I'm sorry that we can't exactly invite you to dine at the same table as ourselves. It would be *infra dig*, you know, to have gaolers and prisoners messing together—one's got to study the conventionalities more or less. Jim, you take them into the old mess-room alongside Pierre's kitchen, and see that they get plenty to eat . . . And I say, Jim, you *are* a dirty beggar, and no mistake! Did you wash your face this morning? Now, honour bright, did you?"

"I don't see what it matters to you," was the sulky reply. "What's the use of washing every day? I washed yesterday mornin'. You're allus on the scrubbin' racket."

With something like a snort of contempt, Campbell left the room.

Our gaoler was a curious-looking customer, truly, and I was by no means surprised that a

smart and seemingly fastidious man like Campbell had taken him to task on the score of cleanliness. He had a luxuriant head of hair and an immense beard, and what could be seen of his face, neck, and chest was the colour of mahogany. The shirt and trousers he wore were of a dull, earthy hue. But still the man was not ill-looking—rather easy-going and good-natured, I thought.

"Jimini!" he now remarked to us. "I guess the boss is concarnin' hisself 'bout things that don't count no-how. What on earth has it to do wid him whether I washes or not? He's sich a crank on soap and wather! It's a waste of time, sez I to him when he gets jawing. I reckon a wash every three days in hot weather in them parts is plenty good enough for any respectable man, an' once a week in winter, when it's maybe ten below zero. What d'ye think, mates?"

I think Pete must have been meant by nature for the diplomatic service, for he replied that every man was supposed to know best what was good for himself. It was probably, he explained, a matter of early training. He was afraid, speaking for his friend — myself —and himself, that we had been rather recklessly brought up, for we had contracted the rather unfortunate habit of wasting a good deal of time, not to speak of good soap and water, in washing ourselves.

"You must be precious dirty blokes!" remarked Jim thoughtfully. "It's them as is clean who don't require to wash. Whoever heerd of a clean man hevin' to wash hisself?"

I came to the conclusion that Jim's mental calibre was of a delightfully original nature, if it did take a somewhat unpleasant turn so far as the prejudices of his comrades were concerned. Pete merely remarked that there was a good deal in what he said, and showed a disposition to change the subject. Jim rose from the upturned keg on which he had seated himself, and for the first time I realised what a burly giant the man was.

"Now thin, gintlemin," he observed, "I guess grub-pile's about a fair thing. Jist walk ahead of me, if you don't mind, out of that there door, or the boss is sure to come down wallop. He's been gettin' precious cranky of late—a-goin' bahmy on the crumpet, I reckon."

We made no comments upon his rather unguarded remarks, but thought that what he said was extremely likely. Pete and I passed together out of the doorway, and entered the kitchen indicated. Pierre, who was a French-Canadian, and a dapper, middle-aged, shrewd-looking fellow, made a little bow as we entered, which Pete and I at once acknowledged by removing our hats—a proceeding which seemed to intensely amuse Jim—and took our seats at the table which the cook pointed out to us.

"WHAT ON EARTH YOU DO? YOU ARE AN EXTREMELY DIRTY FELLOW!"

"Gentlemen," Pierre said, with a politeness that seemed to be misplaced, "pray be seated, and I shall endeavour your requirements to meet."

I thanked him, and asked if I could assist him in any way. This mutual exchange of civilities seemed to grate on Jim's susceptibilities.

"Borack!" he grunted. "You're not in the 'Windsor Hotel' at Montreal now, Froggy. What hev' you got to eat? That's the main point. Black-tail steak! Well, I guess them steaks be sufficiently done for any Christian. You know I likes mine half raw, I does. See here——"

Without asking the cook's permission, he lifted the grill from the wood fire with the evident intention of tossing the steaks with his dirty fingers into a tin dish that stood on the table. With a look of horror and indignation on his face, and with his black beady eyes protruding from their sockets, Pierre caught hold of the grill with one hand and Jim's right hand with the other.

"*Mon Dieu!*" he exclaimed. "What on earth you do? You are an extremely dirty fellow! You will be good enough to seat yourself, and I will myself serve. Your manners remind me of the pig-sow!"

And to my no small surprise the little cook wrested the grill—which was merely an ingenious contrivance of fence wire—from the hands of the in no way abashed giant, and pushed him into his seat opposite us. It was quite evident the cook was not apprehensive of reprisal.

"I reckon as how you've got much the same silly notions as the boss, Pierre," remarked Jim resentfully, "but I bears no malice." He looked at and addressed us. "He's a queer chap, Pierre, he be, a-washin' of hisself three bloomin' times a day and a eatin' of frogs and snails—Faugh! Some people be mortal dirty and disgustin,' and no mistake!"

Pierre merely shrugged his shoulders as if in contempt, and proceeded to dish up the dinner, while our gaoler placed his two brown hands upon the table in front of him and regarded them admiringly. Pete suggested to me afterwards that probably he wished to spoil our appetites so as to have all the more food for himself.

I was surprised at the quality and variety of the food placed before us. There were deer-steaks, and cold bear's meat, which I considered excellent; eggs, good potatoes, spinach, yeast bread, fresh butter, and cheese. Pierre also offered us a little whiskey and water. We thanked him, but declined the whiskey and took some tea instead. If we were to escape we would have to keep our heads always clear so as to seize our opportunity. Pierre eventually joined us in our meal, which proceeded in harmony, Jim's mouth being generally too full to speak, save when he had finished what was on his plate and was obliged to ask for more.

"Now, them eggs," remarked Broncho Pete to Pierre, in whose good graces he seemed anxious to stand, "if it's a fair question, where did you get them? You ain't got no cocks and hens here so far as I kin see."

"Ah, *non!*" exclaimed the little cook, "and it is no cocks and hens we do want here. The crowing of a cock in the morning one would hear for miles. We get them as we get most other things; when we have delivered our cargoes and otherwise would be empty-handed. But we a good garden cultivate on the island. I think it would amuse you to work in it while you are here."

I told Pierre it would give me very great pleasure indeed to do so. After dinner, Pete and I, unasked, assisted him to clean up the things, which simple office seemed to find favour in his eyes. Then we were marched back to an empty shed where we seated ourselves on an old tarpaulin spread along the ground. My companion smoked, while I watched Jim, who some paces off had seated himself on the mud-floor, and with his back to a post, and his pipe in his mouth, watched us fitfully with eyes that every now and again closed as if in sleep, only to open as suddenly again and glare at us apprehensively. The rest of the smugglers were evidently resting, for a deep stillness brooded over the little island. The sun beat down on the lake with a fierce white heat, and the shadows lay black as jet, cleanly cut, palpable. Our surroundings seemed steeped in an air of unreality. It took an effort of will to realise that we were prisoners on a lonely island, the haunt of smugglers and desperadoes, in an almost inaccessible and mythical lake—the dread Lake of the Lost Spirits. How well that sheet of water was named! for surely Pete and I were now well lost to the world. Then I caught myself wondering how long it would be before my uncle and Colin Dunbar would forget that such an unimportant person as myself had ever crossed their paths.

And Muriel Wray! It was odd that a girl should enter into my thoughts at all; but she was something more to me than a mere girl; she had been a friend to me in the truest sense of the word; she had been so good and taken such an interest in me—why, goodness only knew, for I realised that in the knowledge of most things she was my superior. Would she soon forget me? I hoped not. If she did, and by some occult process I were to become aware of it, that, I thought, would be the most distressful phase of the situation. And the £20 she had lent me? It galled me to think that I had not paid it back. To anyone with a spark of honour in him, debt ought to be the greatest menace to peace of mind. Truly, my schemes to get on in the world seemed doomed to be shelved for an indefinite period. The thought of this enforced idleness was almost unbearable.

"Pete," I whispered to my companion, "what do you now think about it? Have you got any idea in your head as to how we can get out of this?"

"I'm a-thinkin', Wally, I'm a-thinkin'," he replied, puffing hard at his pipe, and with a far-away look in his eyes, "it'll be a precious hard thing to do to get out of this 'ere place, seein' as how we're allus pretty sure to be watched. Them two boats are certain to be kept so's it'll be impossible for us to get at them. If we do break that there dunjin-cell—where we're safe to be clapped in every night—it would hev to be a raft. We must take stock of the material for it, and what logs we can lay our hands on through the day, so that we can put 'em together quickly

during the night. But I'm afeard we may hev to wait days and weeks before we gets our chance."

"I've just got an idea, Pete," I remarked. "Wouldn't it be a good thing if we could only send word to our friends, or the police, and let them know our whereabouts?"

Pete looked at me sharply, and then, I thought, with pity, as if he suspected I had taken leave of my senses.

"I'm afear'd, Wally—I'm afear'd," he remarked gently. "You see, there's no Royal Mail in them parts, and, as that feller Kippler sez in his song, 'There ain't no 'buses runnin' 'twixt the Bank and Mandalay.' No, Wally, old stocking, that won't cotton on; and as for bribing one o' them chaps to carry a message, they knows such a thing would mean death if discovered. No, thet won't do, neither."

"Easy, Pete; of course I know that. What I thought of doing was to write a few notes, and stick them into bottles and slip them into the lake. They would in all probability drift on to the mainland, if the wind was in the right direction, and the chances are that some search party would pick them up on the beach. I've read in books and in newspapers of people doing such things."

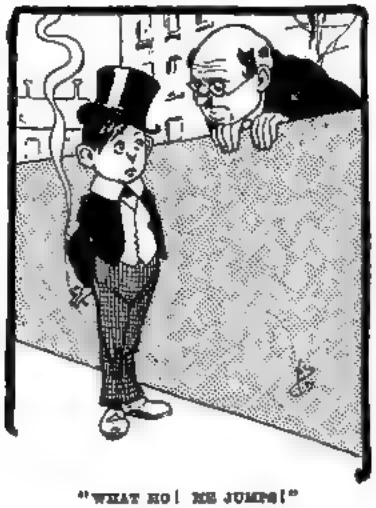
"Bully for you, pardner! bully for you!" whispered Pete admiringly. "There's a lot o' bottles lying 'round, and I think the sooner we does it the better. But you'll hev to do the writin' part, as bein' last at school. Broncho-bustin' and the 'three R's' ain't got much in common."

As luck would have it, I carried a tiny notebook in my belt, which they had not thought of taking from me. It had been part of my work on the round-up to keep tally of all the cattle branded, and it had been used by me to do so. Jim still kept but a half-wakeful look-out upon our actions. It was an easy matter to write out these notes. I did so at once, and placed them in the lining of my hat for fear of accidents. We furtively secured some corks, and managed to hide a flat pint bottle apiece in the bulgy folds of our shirts. Luck was in our way, and before dark we had managed to launch a couple of messages on the Lake of the Lost Spirits without any particular trouble.

Being late in the fall of the year the days were short, and night came on apace. We had supper with Pierre and Jim, as before, and then were taken to our prison-house for the night. I confess my heart sank within me when I saw it. It was the dread dungeon cell the strange-mannered smuggler chief had spoken about.

John Mackie.

(To be continued.)



"WHAT HO! HE JUMPS!"

CHRISTMAS AT THE ASYLUM

By HAMILTON WILLIAMS.

Illustrated by TOM BROWNE

DEAR SIR,—Hush! Swear you won't tell! *We've been keeping up Christmas!* But They mustn't know it, or They might interfere. Of course, you know who They are. They are paid to wait on us, and yet They give themselves all sorts of airs. Goodness knows why! There isn't a titled person among them. And then, look at *us!* You could hardly shut your eyes and heave a brick in any direction without hitting a duke.

Well, I was going to tell you. The Hereditary Grand Prince of the Undiscovered Islands had a letter from abroad giving him secret information that Christmas was coming; so he made everybody pay sixpence, and promise not to tell the others; and then he imparted the mysterious news to each individual in strict privacy.

THE CAPTAIN BROUGHT HIS HALF-BRICK WITH HIM CONCEALED IN THE FOOT OF A STOCKING.

But somehow it leaked out (the envelope was one of those thin foreign ones, and was gone at the corners), and we soon found that we all knew it; but, all the same, we kept up the idea, because it is so nice to have a secret all to one's self, isn't it? So at last we called a meeting "*on very secret and important business,*" and a very delightful meeting it was. All were deeply excited and interested, and many came provided with suggestions and arguments of a most persuasive nature.

The Captain brought his half-brick with him, concealed in the foot of a stocking — "for decency," he said. When asked why, he said that he had hung up his stocking at the foot of his bed when he heard the mysterious news, and that Santa Claus going his rounds had dropped a half-brick into it, he supposed. He said he imagined it was Santa Claus' joke. Anyhow, he brought it along, as it "might come in handy."

The Sultan of Turkey, who claimed the post of chairman by virtue of his seniority, was again furnished with his yataghan. At least, that is what *he* called it, but to most of us it looked suspiciously like the kitchen chopper, over the loss of which the cook has been making such a row for the last month or more. He wore on his head an enormous "ratty" old topper, which fitted him like a dish-cover. He said it was an "Imperial Hatt." He admitted, when pressed on the subject, that he had got it off a scarecrow in a neighbouring field, but he said there was nothing unusual in that; nobody could tell how Imperial Hatts were produced; they simply occurred, "like mushrooms," and he knew this was one the moment he saw it—said he had a mental conviction. (I don't mind telling you privately that some of us think he meant a mental affliction.)

On assuming the chair he said that we had been summoned to consider the most suitable method of keeping Christmas, which, he might tell us (in a hoarse whisper) *was coming*. (Sensation!) In fact he could hear it by placing his ear to the ground—and that he begged to propose a general massacre, to commence at once, if not sooner. He was in the act of drawing his yataghan when the Grand Vizier, rising, as he said, to second him, tipped up the chair, and the motion fell to the ground. So did the chairman, and a very lively debate at once took place, in which the Captain, with the aid of his stocking, convinced the Sultan and his supporters of the inadvisability of violent measures. When the subject had been thoroughly thrashed out Lord Macaulay rose from beneath the table, where he had taken shelter during the debate, and addressed the meeting. He said that, in his opinion, the old ways were the best, and that, for his part, he advocated a return to the ancient customs of Merrie England. He begged to propose, therefore, that we should commence by roasting an ox alive, and he would call upon the Glee Club to sing the "Roast Beef of Old England" in parts during the process. He said it would be peculiarly applicable, as the beef itself would probably only be roasted in parts. This suggestion was greeted with intense enthusiasm, and plans were eagerly discussed for procuring an ox (which one member proposed to compass by the aid of a mouse-trap and a piece of cheese, while another suggested "ferrets"), and a gridiron to roast him on. As it was considered only too probable that he would prove a *pièce de resistance* if he got the chance, it was decided to have him on toast as an *entrée*.

A plum pudding was next suggested, but met with considerable opposition from the gardener on the ground that plums were all over long ago, and that there was not time to raise any from seed. However, he admitted that mixed pickles were then very plentiful, and would form an excellent substitute. This seemed so rational a solution of the difficulty that it was unanimously agreed to order the cook to make a plum pudding of mixed pickles, with a preference for onions. But I must tell you about the gardener. He's a splendid fellow—one of us, you know. He has more original ideas on gardening than anyone I ever met. He always grows his carrots, and parsnips, and such things upside down, so that the roots stick up in the air, and you can see at once what you are gathering. Saves a lot of trouble, don't it? He says that as long as you stand on your head when you are planting them they don't notice the difference. Then you should see his fruit trees! All arranged alphabetically. First a row of apple trees, then a row of axle trees, and so on for the A's; next a row of box trees, followed by a row of boot trees, etc., etc., for the B's; then cabbage trees, and crab trees, and cross trees, and so on, so that anyone can at once find the fruit he wants as long as he knows the alphabet.

It was a first-rate idea, planting boot trees. You see, we were very hard up for boots in the establishment, and it occurred to him that if he could get some good cuttings of boot trees and plant a row of them, in a couple of years he would be able to supply all our demands, and perhaps make a profit on the misfits.

Unfortunately, in spite of all his care, the crop was a failure, as the trees got the blue fly or the red mange, or whatever it was, and the fruit never got further than the infant worsted stage, so he told us. He said that one or two of them might have done for bedroom slippers, but even then they were rather down at the heel.

Well, when we had settled the question of the plum pudding, he added that he supposed we should be wanting some Christmas trees. Now, wasn't that clever? Nobody had ever thought of such a thing, but *he* did, you see. Comes of being familiar with trees. He said he had a whole row of Christmas trees in the orchard, planted between the crab trees and the cross trees, because they were always interfering with each other, and "the influence of the Christmas trees was so good." He had tried grafting a shoot of box on to the stem of one of his Christmas trees with a view to growing Christmas boxes, which, he understood, were a very paying variety, but he said the boys were so troublesome they got them all before he was

up. He assured us that there was nothing like a Christmas tree for a buttonhole, so we ordered one apiece all round. Then, all of a sudden, like a streak of lightning, or a kick from the off hind leg of an ostrich, an idea occurred to me. It is not my fault. I can't help it. It's like fits.

I said, "Blow all this jaw! Let's have a ball!" That *did* it, you know. Before you could say "knife" we had forgotten all about the ox, and the plum pudding, and the Christmas trees, and everything, and, clasping each other round the waist, or the neck, or by the hair, we began to dance as hard as we possibly could. The Great Mogul, with wonderful presence of mind, turned off the gas; Massa Johnson and one or two professional people supplied some temporary music on the fire-irons and the fender, with the aid of a brass waiter or two, and we spun round and round in the dark among the tables and chairs in the fireplace, down the passage, over the stairs, by twos, by threes, by dozens! Capital! Never had such a ball in my life! In a short time we were knee-deep in bits of furniture and pieces of partners, and in the middle of it all, to add, if possible, to the hilarity, someone raised a cry of "Fire!" and then we fairly boiled over with delight.

NEVER HAD SUCH A BALL IN MY LIFE!

It *was* jolly! *They* turned up at last at the cry of fire, and, as we expected, threw cold water on the whole thing. We never can have a little harmless amusement without their interfering. When the gas was lit again we found our chairman at the bottom of the stairs, moaning. He said his neck was broken in three places, at which we all shrieked with delight. The Grand Vizier, who had been sitting out the last dance on the stairs with the Sultan, was so altered that we should hardly have known him; somebody had mistaken his face for a doormat. The Great Mogul was with difficulty extracted from the furniture. He made a great fuss over one of his legs, which he said was smashed, but the gardener assured him that it did not matter, he could easily chop it right off and take some cuttings from it. I came off with very little to show—only a tooth or two loose and my right eye in a sling; but my head's a bit swollen—can't get my hat on without a shoe-horn, you know. But it *was* jolly while it lasted. I wish you'd been there—you *would* have enjoyed it. Well, good-bye. Merrie Christmas, etc., etc., etc.

"YOU KNOW WHO"

(Or if you don't you ought to be ashamed of yourself).

PANTOMIMES.

By a School-boy.

There are two kinds of pantomimes—there is the grand pantomime that tries to be funny, and the funny (?) pantomime that tries to be grand.

We will first of all say something about the grand pantomime.

Our masculine parent books seats for us weeks before the holidays, and keeps the tickets safe until the night we are to go, when he will forget where he put them. He will begin by saying that he remembers giving them to mamma, but mamma assures him that she has never seen them. He will then declare that someone has hidden them, or that the housemaid has thrown them away, or burnt them. At last someone asks him what clothes he wore when he booked the seats. After a great deal of arguing, he thinks he wore his light overcoat (which has been put away in camphor for the winter), and when it is found the tickets also are found in one of the pockets.

The tickets found, a start is made (there should be six to go to a grand pantomime—papa, mamma, Jack, age twenty, who is sure to miss the train, Mary, age eighteen, Will, age fourteen, and Baby, age eleven). But before half the journey is over someone is sure to ask who has got the opera glasses, and just as sure as one asks that question so sure is it that every one has forgotten them.

But let us pass on to the panto., as it is called in these days of telegrams and motors, when one has not time to use long words. On arriving, the tickets are torn by a cross-breed between a footman and a railway guard, who hands them on to a glorified sort of parlour-maid, who, in her turn, will find the right numbers, knock down half-a-dozen uncomfortable seats, give away programmes, and expect at least a shilling. A large orchestra is playing selections best known to the organ-grinder. Loud choruses are shouted from the gallery, and a fragrance of Spanish and Jaffa fruit arises from the pit. Gradually the music quickens, a bell rings, the gas goes out, the curtain rises, and the show has commenced.

Now, the panto. is always the same—it does not matter at all about the name. First there is the wicked fairy in red fire, who threatens everyone and everything, followed by the good fairy with lights turned up, who declares war against him. Secondly, there are two funny men (one dressed as a woman), who sing topical songs with everlasting encore verses. Thirdly, a ballet. Fourthly, a procession, which is cheered, clapped, hissed, or hooted, as the different representatives march down the centre of the stage; a song or two by the leading boy and girl; a sleepy sort of transformation scene; and a silly harlequinade, finished off with the National Anthem, a rush to get outside and home, when watches are stolen, and last trains and tempers lost.

There is not much to be said about the funny panto. except that the funniness is quite unintentional. Time is precious, but, nevertheless, go to your local theatre, and there you will see a funny pantomime.

C. Hubert Wolff.

TAKING THE MAN IN ITS BRAWNY ARMS, THE BRUTE HELD HIM OVER ITS HEAD FOR A MOMENT, THEN, WITH ALL ITS FORCE, DASHED HIM TO THE GROUND.

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A MATCH FOR A MILLION.

BY HAROLD MACFARLANE

A CHRISTMAS EVE ADVENTURE.

"THE most remarkable match in which I ever played?" repeated "E.B. Bee," and without hesitation he counterqueried: "Need you ask?"

"Personally I never saw you play better than when you scored that eighty-seven at Trent Bridge on a half-baked wicket," I replied; "but a single innings does not constitute a match."

Du Cane laughed.

"How about single wicket matches?" he asked.

"Even then a second innings is customary," I replied.

"To be sure! Nevertheless, the most remarkable match I ever took part in was single wicket, decided by a single innings, and it was played on Christmas Day."

"In Australia?" I asked, my thoughts immediately turning to the famous tour in which L. B. Du Cane's team went through the season without defeat.

"In Yorkshire, a couple of years ago," was the unexpected answer.

"As a county," said I, "the 'Tykes' acknowledge no superior for sport, therefore the circumstances under which this match was played must have been extraordinary, for the true sportsman, however keen he is on a game, observes the close season, albeit the same is a matter of custom only. I should like to have some particulars of that match."

"I have no objection to giving them to you," he replied. Then, stirring the fire into a cheerful blaze, the great cricketer leaned back in his chair and related the following experience.

* * * * *

"The chief object I had in view on leaving school for the University was the obtaining of my 'blue'; after that, if I had any time, I determined to have a shot at a pass degree. I did not tell my father my decision, as he had set his heart on the one thing, and he had the strongest objection to anybody having two objects in view at the same time.

"'My dear boy,' he said, just before I left for Alma Mater, 'I'm comfortably off, as you

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know. Nevertheless, I'm making several sacrifices on your behalf in giving you a university education; in return I expect you to attend carefully to your coaches, practise assiduously, and go for every chance that comes your way. Write regularly to your mother, and—harken to my last words on this subject—ever play with a straight bat, and cultivate your glance to leg—there's no knowing if it may not be the making of you. By the way, you had better find out at once the minimum number of lectures you are obliged to attend, and, for goodness' sake, confine your head-work to matters appertaining to scientific cricket.'

"By great good luck I obtained my blue in my first year, and, that anxiety off my mind, was able to devote that portion of the winter days in which I was not engaged in keeping myself in condition to a little mental recreation, such as is furnished in the lecture room by the Greek, Latin, and philosophical professionals engaged on the ground. Hence it came about that I did sufficiently well in examinations to justify the examiners in putting my name in the list, and so, in the course of time, when not engaged on serious work at Old Trafford, or other cricket grounds, I found myself putting in some reading, with the idea of being called to the Bar, in the chambers of Austin Clocker—he is now a Q.C., and will be a judge some day, but when he dies he will always be remembered for his famous innings against time and Surrey during the early 'eighties. No worthier epitaph could he have than: 'He scored 121 in ninety minutes.'

"It was at Clocker's country residence, 'The Willow,' that I met his niece, Miss Wilhemina Grace Eden, and, straightway falling in love with her, proposed, and was accepted. For a time the course of true love ran smoothly. I scored five centuries during the season, and we were champion county, but then two misfortunes happened to us in rapid succession. First, our best and only fast bowler broke down in health, and, said the doctor, would never play again; second, Mrs. Eden lost the bulk of her fortune through the failure of an Australian bank, whereupon Grace broke off our engagement. She further said that she should always follow my cricket career with the greatest interest, hoped that I should have plenty of happy lives given to me by the opposing field, and that we should continue to be *friends*.

"A BLIZZARD WAS RAGING WHEN I CHANGED FOR A SECOND TIME AT NORTHATTERICTON."

"Taking heart of grace from the latter part of the letter, I jumped at an offer to spend Christmas with the Spences at Battwell House, for I knew that my friend's estate adjoined the comfortable though small house occupied by the Edens, and that the possibility of meeting Grace on several occasions was assured. It was a crowded train that left King's Cross on the morning of December 24th, but on changing at York I found that off the main line the passenger traffic was very moderate, and when, late in the afternoon, on changing yet a second time, I examined the carriages of the waiting train that would carry me up to Battwell—which is situated at the further end of Wisedale—I discovered that there was only one passenger beyond Cevale, and that one myself.

"The day was not of the description that one would elect to travel upon if one had any say in the matter. A thick fog enveloped London, betokening a black frost, which only gave way when we were well out into the country to dull leaden skies, threatening a snowy

downfall. At Huntingdon, sure enough, it began to snow, and York—when we reached it—was seemingly wrapped in swansdown. A blizzard that was raging when I changed for the second time at Northattericton did not hold out any promise of fast scoring on the part of our engine, and I gathered that not only should I arrive at Battwell after the bell had rung for the clearing of the ground preparatory to dinner, but there was just a possibility of my not doing so before stumps were drawn, or, rather, the house locked up for the night.

"I knew the Wisedale stations off by heart, having passed through them in happier days when, after a big match on the Headingley ground, Leeds, or at Bramhall Lane, I had gone to Battwell to spend Sunday with the Edens. One off day, indeed, I had assisted Maybrook against Cevale, but that was not exactly a happy day, for I was yorked by Haigh for a single. I took a melancholy interest in looking out on the scene of my downfall, or as near as I could get to the scene, considering it was pitch dark and the railway ran in a cutting, and I was so lost in thought, considering how I ought to have played that ball, and would have played it had I not observed Captain Lashingley leaning over Grace's chair, that it was not until some time had evidently passed that I recognised that my mode of locomotion had developed stone-wall tactics which had reduced its rate of scoring to nothing per hour. We were at a standstill.

"I ASKED IF IT HAD SOME HISTORY ATTACHED TO IT."

"Presently the door opened, and a cold blast and a man's head appeared through the aperture, the latter of whom delivered himself of the remark, 'Very sorry, sir, cannot get any further to-night; the snow has drifted into the cutting. One cannot get backwards or forwards. You're the gent as was going to Battwell, sir, I suppose?'

"I assented.

"'Then your best plan will be to get out of this, climb the bank, and make for Wiseby yonder. It's only in the cuttings that the snow has drifted; you may get a conveyance to take you on. Straight up the bank and across these fields—you cannot go wrong,' he added.

"That's the sort of remark that the old hand, who is not playing, makes to the colt who is about to make his *début* on a wicket that Briggs would always like to carry about with him in his cricketing bag. Anyone can 'go wrong' in that sense; it is the easiest thing you can do, and in the present instance I did it most successfully.

"What on earth induced me to attempt to find Wiseby without a lantern I cannot say. At the best of times it is most diminutive, and at the worst, such as on the occasion I sought it, it resembled the proverbial needle in the bottle of hay, and was not to be found by anyone but an Andrée or Nansen.

"For some little time I wandered on, every now and then falling into a snow-drift, or tripping over some object hidden in the snow, but always getting wetter and colder whatever I did. It was, therefore, with the greatest relief that I saw looming before me a building that might have been a barn, but was decidedly not a dwelling-house, which, in the event of its possessing a roof, would be a veritable haven for me. It had no roof, and, considering how the wind swept about it, could not be regarded as a haven, though it was the means of discovering one to me. As I walked round the building I espied a red light, which conjured up visions of a comfortable farmhouse, of red blinds, and ham and eggs. The barn-like structure had no further interest for me, and I made a march that Cæsar himself would have approved of, so undeviating was it. What did it matter if I stumbled over a stone wall and fell into a stye? What did it matter if I heard ice cracking beneath my feet as I recognised that I was crossing a pond, and, more ominous still, the crack of glass as I inadvertently put my foot through a cold frame, when in the end I arrived at the cottage of the red blinds, and—

knocking—was admitted to its comfortable shelter?

"The door was opened by a woman, but my request for a night's lodging was answered by someone—undoubtedly a man—in a room opening off the passage. 'You are gladly welcome, sir,' said the unknown cheerily, and my heart bounded just as if I had won the toss and the wicket was hard and true.

"You have heard of Yorkshire hospitality? It is famous all the land over, and I found that, at Redridge Farm at all events, its extent had not been exaggerated. Such kindness to an absolute stranger was almost unparalleled. My host, whom I speedily discovered to be one of the best, was between sixty and seventy, but one of those well-preserved 'tykes' that you meet in the northern dales, who seem to have, and doubtless do possess, more energy than is to be found in the ordinary run of men two-thirds their age. Besides his vitality, he possessed a fund of anecdote that rendered him a most amusing companion; moreover, he, too, like myself, was a cricket maniac. I really do not remember passing many more enjoyable evenings than that one at Redridge, chatting over the heroes of the cricket field past and present.

"Above the mantelpiece, I noted on entering the parlour, was a glass case in which a bat reposed after some hard usage, judging from the condition of the blade, and in the course of the evening I asked if it had some history attached to it.

"'Hardly history,' said my host, 'though it's done some good work in its day. Try it.'

"I took the bat, and, having extolled it for its excellent balance, without thinking made a variety of strokes at imaginary balls, as one generally does when a bat is put into one's hands for approval. Presently I heard my host murmuring, 'Good! Dead on the wicket and shooting. He can "hook" 'em and "glance" 'em, and no mistake! A sweet cut indeed! Um, fond of opening his shoulders to the slows—don't blame him either with that reach!'

"I was about to put the bat down when I noticed a flat groove round the bottom of the blade, and remarked upon it, but the enthusiast passed my query over, saying, 'You handled it like a master—might I ask if you play much?' And on my telling him who I was—having omitted to do so before—I had to submit to much hand-shaking, the old gentleman making very flattering remarks the while.

"'I've watched your career with interest since your first century in the parks, sir,' said he, 'but I rarely leave the farm, so I've never seen you play.' He paused, and then somewhat excitedly continued, 'I'd like to see you play Chinn's bowling—that I would. That would be a treat—eh! it would.'

"'I don't know his name—is he a local man? Fast, medium, or slow?' I inquired, innocently. The man undoubtedly knew something about cricket, and even local enthusiasm would not in him evoke over-praise, and I confess I hoped Chinn would prove to be fast, for then he might be worth qualifying for my county, and, eventually, take the place of our lame duck. 'How is it the Yorkshire Committee has overlooked him?' I queried.

"'Whom?' he asked, surprised.

"'Why, the man you spoke of—Chinn?'

"His face clouded as if he were annoyed at something, and he made a sound expressive of contempt.

"'Oh! he's no good, really—no good. Doesn't bowl with his head. Well, sir, if you are ready I will show you to your room; we go to bed early at Redridge,' and rising, he took up a candlestick and conducted me to my cosy apartment, in which a gorgeous fire crackled in the hearth.

"I fell asleep whilst thinking over the mysterious bowler, and dreamed that I was standing at the wicket awaiting his attack; the wicket-keeper appeared to be in the neighbourhood of the screen, and, with the exception of the bowler, every fieldsman stood somewhere behind the wicket. Chinn was a giant in my dreams, and, after taking an inordinate run, he delivered the ball with force sufficient to knock the bat out of my hands; but, although I could see it looming, it never got nearer, and I woke ere it reached me.

"'There will be no getting out to-day, sir,' said my host, after the usual Christmas greetings on my arrival in the parlour; 'a regular blizzard is blowing, and the snow is too deep for any conveyance. I'm sorry you should be disappointed, but, personally, I welcome any agency whatever it may be that gives me the pleasure of your society.'

"The meal over, my friend went to look after his live stock, but on his return I noticed that his manner had changed and that he was once more nervous and excited.

"'I should like to see you playing Chinn's bowling—that I would!' said he.

"'Some day I may have that pleasure, and I hope it will be a pleasure—for me,' I replied.

"'Why not to-day?' he queried quietly

"'I've played on some curious wickets,' I replied, and, pointing out of the window where

the snow lay thick, I added, 'but that, I think, would be a bit too soft.'

"'It would that—but under cover it wouldn't,' he answered. 'I've seen Chinn, and he's willing if you are.'

"'But where could we play?' I asked, quite ready to humour the old man who had treated me so courteously.

"'Well, there's the crypt,' he replied, to my complete astonishment. 'It's dry and warm enough.'

"'The what?' I gasped.

"'The crypt of the abbey,' he answered stoically. 'You noticed the remains of the abbey as you came along—it's Eccleshaw Abbey.' Undoubtedly that was the barn-like structure in which I had hoped to have found a haven. 'Only the refectory remains above ground, but below there's the crypt.'

"'And the light?'

"'Come and see, sir—you'll be surprised.'

"I was—not only with the light, which was electric, but with many other things. The old man chuckled at my expression of astonishment.

"'Those old monks knew a thing or two,' said he. 'Their kitchen was just outside there, and for culinary purposes they diverted a stream that rises in the hill behind, until it ran under the floor. I find that stream useful in running the turbine that works the dynamo that charges the cells which supply these lamps and keep 'em steady. You couldn't keep lamps like them steady if you ran 'em straight from the dynamo—it's secondary batteries that do the trick.'

"I had hardly listened to his enthusiastic jargon about his electric light instalment, for my attention was taken up with the appearance of the chamber in which we stood, and which we had gained by descending through a trap-door in the floor of the farmer's parlour.

"In the centre of this lengthy underground chamber, and sunk into the floor so that the top was just on a level with its surroundings, stretched a strip of green felt the length of a cricket pitch; at one end stood three stumps, with bails complete, placed in a brass receiver, which, in turn, was embedded in concrete floor; at the other, a single stump stood alone. The pitch, it may be remarked, was accurately marked out.

THERE, LYING ON THE FLOOR OR ON SHELVES, WERE PILES OF ECCLESIASTICAL ACCESSORIES.

"On a level with the wickets, and close to them, was a box-like arrangement I could not understand the object of; behind the stumps, and exactly their breadth and height, an iron erection, which also seemed to me objectless.

"I walked on to the pitch, under the impression that it would feel to the tread like a matting wicket over concrete; I was mistaken, however; I could hardly tell the difference from ordinary turf. It was then that I observed behind the erection of iron a short length of chain fixed at one end to the ground in front to the brass receiver for the stump; the other end had an oblong link with a practicable catch, and I immediately thought of the shallow groove at the bottom of the bat I had seen on my host's mantelpiece; but why should the bat be chained, I asked myself? But I could not answer the question, or any other, for I seemed to be in a dream.

"'I've seen some fine innings played there,

on that very pitch,' said the farmer reflectively. 'There was Jeffrey's 102 in three hours—a fine innings, but Chinn got him in the end.' Jeffrey was before my time, but I was well enough up in cricket history to know that he was a magnificent player, and that there was something mysterious about his end. 'You wouldn't have expected it, sir, but the first ball Trickett received on this pitch was the last—or the last but one. He mistimed it all the way. Yes; I believe he did die rather suddenly—fell down a crevice in these parts and broke his neck. Poor Pilchard, too—shot himself through the head by accident, or was murdered, no one ever found out—played a sweet forty-seven, but he was too eager to score, and Chinn bowled him with a "yorker."'

"But how did they make any runs—the ball couldn't be hit far enough to make a run safe?' I asked.

"'A straight drive to the bowler's wall counts two; a square cut, or any hit to the off wall, three; and hits to leg, one; whilst hits to anywhere behind the wicket, nothing. Extras don't count, and the only way you can get out, except l.b.w., is by being clean bowled. You would like to know what inducement I had to make them play, eh? Well, sir, what do you think of *that* for talent money to be paid on the completion of an innings of two hundred runs? It's fine, isn't it—but no one has earned it yet—Chinn's too good.'

"'As he spoke, my host, concerning whose sanity I was getting a trifle apprehensive, pushed at the seemingly solid stone wall behind us, with the result that a portion of the masonry swung round as if on a pivot, revealing an inner chamber and a sight that made me draw in my breath with astonishment.

"There, lying on the floor or on shelves, were piles of ecclesiastical accessories, such as gold altar plates, crucifixes of gold, golden croziers studded with precious stones. I noted also some ancient volumes, one at least, a Mazarin Bible, worth almost £4,000, and one, a 'Psalmorum Codex,' that would sell for a thousand more. Candelabra of gold, and sacks—one of them had burst, and its contents were scattered over the floor—of gold coins, which I imagined to be nobles and angels, and divers heavily iron-cased coffers, promising to contain further riches, greeted my eyes.

"'Whose property is this?' I gasped.

"'If possession is nine points of the law, it is mine,' replied the farmer, 'for I discovered it many years ago. If there is any justice in the land it rightfully belongs to the lord of the manor, but doubtless the Treasury would claim it all with the exception of the fraction they give according to custom to the informer, but I have no fear of informers when Chinn's about—nobody can play Chinn's bowling for long.'

"Who on earth was this Chinn? what had he to do with the treasure? and what on earth was I to do with the raving lunatic, whose remarks, innocent though they were, had so sinister a sound?

"'They little thought they would have Chinn guarding their treasure, did they, sir?' he asked irrelevantly.

"'Who?' I asked.

"'The monks, of course,' he answered querulously—'the monks of Aquadix, of Rivers, of Rivemont. The monks of Leaby Abbey, of Eccleshaw Abbey, and of Barton Priory. When Henry parcelled out their property in the sixteenth century, do you think they left their dwellings in a tenantable state of repair, with all their furniture and effects for the new comers? Not they; they knew a thing worth two of that: they evidently held a meeting and secretly brought the contents of their treasuries to Eccleshaw, and placed the same in this secret vault, and waited until better times came round for them, and they could claim their property with safety. It's worth a million, sir, every penny of a million. But, there—no man alive can score two hundred off Chinn, so what's the good of it?'

"'But do you mean to say that you would give this property to anyone who did score that number? I don't think it is yours to give, by the way. However, it is a very tempting offer, for, after all, the player has everything to win and nothing to lose.'

"'Only his life,' was the laconic response.

"I looked at him askance, but the immobility of his features and the calm tones of his voice showed that he was undoubtedly serious, and was not cracking a somewhat morbid joke at my expense.

"'The stumps are fixed in brass receivers, which are on hinges. When the wicket falls the hinged portion releases a trigger, and the batsman receives a bullet about the height of his heart; if two stumps fall, then he receives two bullets—one through the heart and one through the brain; and if all three are disarranged, he is pretty well riddled. The apparatus is contained in a box placed at about the position point would occupy—you may have noticed it? I don't do anything myself but watch—it's grand sport, sir! Are you ready to play? You will soon get accustomed to the light chain on the bat, which is to prevent too hard hitting and to put Chinn on equal terms with the batsman. He's a grand bowler, sir, if there ever was one.'

"'Rather hard luck,' said I, trying to avoid his question and gain time whilst I thought of some plan of escape, 'to be bowled by a "no ball" under these circumstances.'

"'Not at all. I am the fairest of umpires, and if Chinn delivered a "no ball" I should call the same and throw the firing apparatus out of gear by means of a lever, upon which I always keep my foot in readiness; but, as a matter of fact, his action is above reproach. You will find these pads and gloves will about fit you.'

"'But my status as an amateur — it is quite impossible for me to play for a wager, let alone the immorality of staking my life against your treasure.'

"My host's face changed, and an ugly look spread over it.

"'Lucius Odell, the Oxford smiter, urged the same excuse—poor fellow, he was never heard of again, from the time he left Redmont to cross the fells to gain Yoredale. He preferred to wrestle with Chinn than to play against him. Chinn!'

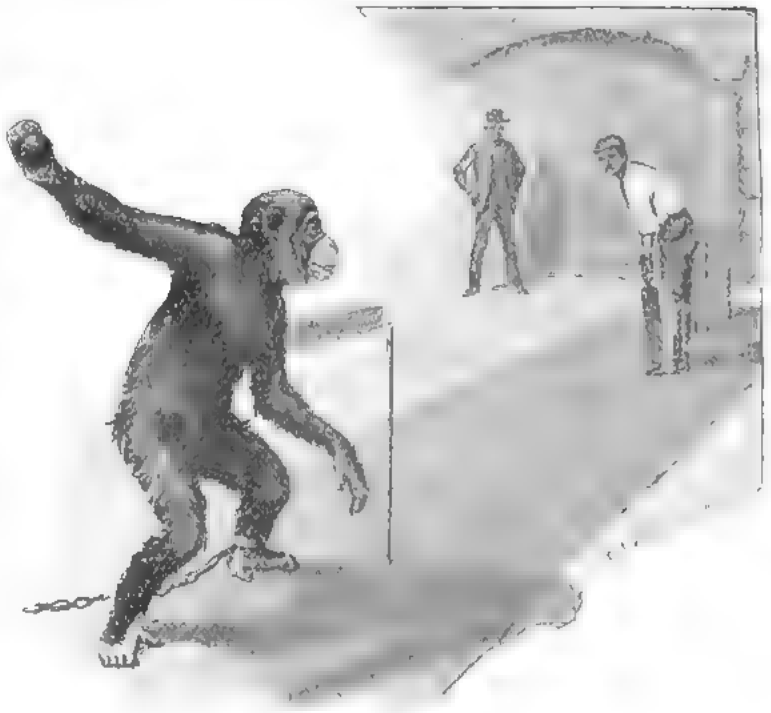
"He raised his voice, and the noise of a rattling chain was followed by the appearance of an apparition from a cavity in the far wall that caused me to recoil in horror. *Chinn was a huge ape of the genus Chimpanzee!*

"'Shall the chain be loosened, or will you play?' queried the maniac.

* * * * *

"A full report of that remarkable match can never be given, for the only being left who witnessed it—myself—is unable to recall the incidents of what seemed like a terrible nightmare.

"I had always been under the impression that it was a characteristic of the anthropoid apes to possess a malformation of the arm that would preclude round-arm bowling. I found, however, in the case of Chinn, that I was mistaken, and that he bowled in perfect style, his tremendously long reach, as in the case of the great Australian bowler, Trumble, rendering the flight of the ball most deceptive. Another impression I had to correct was in connection with the capacity for headwork on the part of my opponent. I expected on taking my stand at the wickets to be bombarded with balls possessing cannon-ball-like velocity, and I was not disappointed, the first delivery being a 'yorker' that I only got down to in time, and which realised a couple of runs to my credit, and a complimentary remark on the part of the scorer and umpire. The second ball was almost a wide, and rebounded with such force from the wall behind that the wickets would have been shattered but for the iron shield. The third ball utterly deceived me, and, playing at it too soon, I gave the easiest of catches to the bowler, whilst the fourth broke in with tremendous velocity, and it was only at the second attempt that I prevented it going into my wicket.



CHINN BOWLED IN PERFECT STYLE.

"To describe the game in detail would only weary you, and it will suffice to say that at seventy-six we adjourned for refreshment, and at ninety-two my off bail was sent flying by a beautiful ball that beat me all the way, but without the wicket being disarranged or any catastrophe happening. Having lost my wicket in the only way possible, except by getting my leg in front of a straight one, I waited developments in fear and trembling, but apparently the spectator, not being satiated, and quite satisfied that the inevitable would happen later on,

decided to give me another chance, and, replacing the bail, bade me continue my innings. At this point of the match I changed my game, with the result that before I scored my first century I had given twenty chances, and caused the umpire to groan aloud at the terrible display. Nevertheless, runs came with tolerable rapidity, and I played with greater confidence than before.

"The century took me three hours to compile, but the next fifty came in forty minutes, chiefly from forcing strokes to the on, but more than once I was in difficulties, and the umpire significantly remarked that the penalty for 'l.b.w.' was the loosening of the chain—not that of the bat, but of the bowler.

"After that I played more carefully for a time, with the result that the rate of scoring fell off, and I had time to remember the fatigue that almost overpowered me. Recognising that, unless the innings came to a rapid conclusion, my physical weariness would be the cause of my discomfiture — for Chinn was bowling like a machine, without showing a sign of exhaustion, and I was not in condition—I, figuratively speaking, took my heart in my hands and went for the attack in a manner that caused my score to leap forward. At 192 Chinn bowled a succession of 'no balls,' stepping over the bowling crease in his eagerness; from two of these I scored, but the third bowled me neck and crop, with no fearful result, however, as the umpire had, as he promised, thrown the firing apparatus out of gear.

"I stuck at 199 for what appeared to me to be weeks, the agility of Chinn in stopping the balls I managed to get away being marvellous; at last an express came along which I entirely missed and which just missed the bails. As I played at it I heard a confused murmur and a dreary, horrible shriek.

"'No ball!' repeated the umpire, and then, shaking his fist at the trembling chimpanzee, he added, in a voice full of concentrated bitterness, 'for throwing!'

"I had won the match.

"Then the concentrated excitement overcame me, and I felt my legs give way beneath my weight, whilst simultaneously I heard the rattle of the chain and saw the hateful shadowy outline of the monster bound forward, on realising that it was free. Whether the creature received its liberty by accident or design I do not know; but, if the former, then the author of the treachery soon received his punishment, for, halting half-way down the pitch, the ape stopped, turned, and then bounded to its master, who a moment later was struggling for his life. Powerless to intervene, or even to separate the only weapon at hand—the bat—from its chain and band, I was the spectator of the terrible fight between man and beast, which ended in the only way one could expect. Taking the man in its brawny arms, the brute held him over its head for a moment, then, with all its force, dashed him to the ground—a sickening sight.

"I was not left long in doubt as to the intention of the animal towards me, for, finding that its opponent no longer thwarted it, Chinn advanced on hands and feet in my direction—with what object I could easily guess. I noted that when the farmer lay still, strangled by his quondam favourite, the beast no longer affected any interest in him; I, therefore, determined to simulate death, hoping that it would also favour me with its indifference, and lay stretched at full length on the pitch between the creases.

"The ape advanced stealthily, and possessed itself of the bat, the chain of which it snapped with hardly an effort; then, raising itself to its full height, with the bat over its head, it aimed a terrific blow at my recumbent figure which would have smashed in my ribs with the greatest ease had I not, with a tremendous muscular effort, moved out of the way just in time to avoid the blow. Disappointed of its prey at the first blow, the beast did not intend the second to fail, and a moment later I found myself lying with the monster standing directly above me in a threatening attitude. For a moment nothing happened; then, as with a tremendous sweep of the bat the ape seemed to assure my death, I closed my eyes, and simultaneously three shots rang out, and I fainted.

"When I came to myself I found the monster lying at my feet, and the most cursory glance revealed that it had been shot in three places. Undoubtedly, when sweeping the bat over its head for the second onslaught, it had inadvertently hit the stumps, knocking them out of the perpendicular and releasing the triggers of the shooting apparatus. To this lucky accident alone I undoubtedly owed my life. And that, my friend, is the history of my most exciting match."

"But the treasure!" I urged—"what became of it? Did the Government claim it?"

"No; when the property was allocated by the Eighth Henry to a certain favourite of his, the treasure, which could not be found, but was known to be hidden on it, was also awarded to him. And so from generation to generation the land was handed down until the present owner came into possession, together with the treasure which could not be discovered, but was specifically mentioned in the ancient title-deeds."

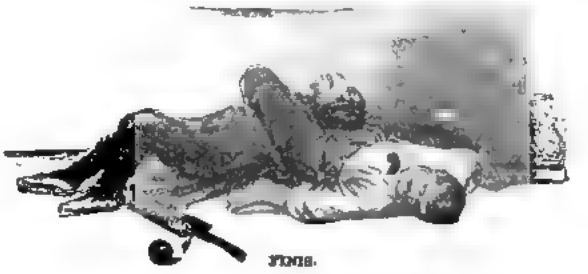
"The owner of the land, or the heirs of the sportsman who received the allotment from the bluff monarch—or whoever was entitled to the find—must have been jolly thankful to you for discovering it."

"She was, indeed; and as a reward gave me herself."

"Why——"

"The favourite of Henry, who received the gift of the abbey lands from him, was Sir Godfrey Eden, great-great—to the ninth power—grandfather of my wife, *née* Wilhemina Grace Eden, sole heiress of the Eden estate."

"That *was* a match," said I thoughtfully.



FINIS.

MORE SCHOOL CRICKET RESULTS.

SCHOOL.	PLAYED	WON.	LOST.	DRAWN.	BEST BATTING AVERAGE.	BEST BOWLING AVERAGE.	HIGHEST INDIVIDUAL SCORES BY
Carpenters Company's Institute, Stratford	13	10	2	1	W. Lawson, 17	W. Lawson, 2·7	W. Lawson, 108 G. W. Bower, 89
Christ's College, Brecon	29	8	7	7	L. Griffiths, 26	E. Morgan, 7·2	L. Griffiths, 96 W. E. Jones, 66 F. H. E. Nicholls, 40 H. E. Powell-Jones, 40
Denstone	15	6	4	3	H. S. Barber, 19	G. T. Berry, 5·3	H. S. Barber, 100* G. T. Berry, 31
Lampeter ... ... (College School)	19	8	3	2	Austin Davies, 14·3	H. A. Thomas, 9·4	S. Thomas, 57 Austin Davies, 50* H. S. Thomas, 38 T. J. Rees, 30
Llandovery	18	3	9	6	A. H. Owen, 14·5	J. R. Snape, 8·3	A. L. Green, 67 A. H. Owen, 55 H. S. Vinning, 37
Manchester ... ... (St. Bede's College)	16	14	1	1	J. H. King, 29·27	C. S. Flynn, 7·26	J. H. King, 68* C. Dunleavy, 54 C. Radcliffe, 52*
Merchant Taylors' ...	21	9	4	8	M. B. Tasker, 36·5	J. E. Raphael, 14·5	J. E. Raphael, 117 M. B. Tasker, 110* O. C. White, 85* T. Dennis, 83* H. E. Crawford, 74
Merchiston Castle School...	16	7	3	6	A. W. Duncan, 32 61	S. Forsyth, 7·74	A. W. Duncan, 175* J. M. Brown, 130* L. de Villiers, 68 S. Forsyth, 63
Portsmouth Grammar School...	13	4	8	1	A. H. Wood, 35·4	W. R. Ames, 12·2	A. H. Wood, 104* W. R. Griffin, 64 E. A. L. Nickerson, 39
Prior Park, Bath ...	15	7	7	1	A. Griffiths, 23·7	J. Brooks, 6·57	A. Griffiths, 81 E. Power, 62
Sexey's School, Bruton	10	7	3	0	R. J. Knight, 24 14	R. Sharpe, 2·86	R. J. Knight, 69 R. Sharpe, 51*
St. Paul's Cathedral Choir School ...	9	4	4	1	C. E. Winn, 25·33	R. H. L. Tinney, 4·37	C. H. Pym, 68* C. E. Winn, 48
Wantage ... ... (King Alfred's)	18	11	5	2	A. E. Cox, 27·6	G. Hefford, 4·2	A. E. Cox, 125* E. W. Whittington, 86
Wootton	21	14	11	6	Parmiter, 15·37	J. Methuen, 7·11	C. Methuen, 37 R. S. Eady, 36 Parmiter, 35

* Not out.

ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL, and How to Play It.

(SECOND ARTICLE.)

DOUBTLESS most of you have noticed the marvellous knack some first-rate players have of always being in the right place at the right moment. In their own spheres, G. O. Smith, W. J. Oakley, and Needham, for instance, seem always on the ball—it follows them about. More often than not "G. O." gets the ball without having to work for it, Needham without having to tackle. The reason is they are always anticipating, and with such consummate judgment that they are nearly always right. This knack is one of the distinctive features of really great players. Its value is obvious, for how much easier to take the ball when free than when engaged by an adversary? The best and surest way to get the ball is to be

ON IT BEFORE ANYONE ELSE.

Just think that out.

Judgment comes from talent, intelligence, and experience. No one can give it you, nor can you win it from books. But you can do what is very helpful towards gaining the power of anticipating; watch the game with the closest and liveliest attention. Keep up with the game, keen, quick-witted, and full of an intense desire to anticipate all its moves; then you will find yourself gaining this power till it becomes a habit. Watch the ball, and on to it instanter. This is possible without leaving your place. Stick to your own sphere, but in it be ubiquitous—and always in time.

AS REGARDS TACKLING,

your aim should be, not only to dispossess your adversary, but to do this in such a manner that the ball passes completely into your control. The first thing, of course, is to get the ball, but you should have an eye to being able afterwards to dispose of it as you like. If you cannot get the ball you must cause the possessor to pass; this will give one of your own men a chance of intercepting the ball, or, at any rate, of tackling the receiver at an advantageous moment.

Effectiveness in tackling depends partly on timing your effort properly, partly on adopting a good method. As to timing, judgment alone

WILL TIP YOU THE RIGHT MOMENT.

But remember that the possessor is an easier victim on receiving, or having just received, the ball than when he has got hold of it and is under way. Hence, nothing pays better than to reach him as soon as the ball does, or immediately afterwards. When you have to deal with a man who is well off with the ball, you should get close to him, and snatch the first instant in which he and the ball are, by some slight mistake of his, at all separated. You must nip in when the ball and the man are apart, or else you must create this separation by impeding the man.

Roughly speaking, there are three ways of tackling: you may pay more attention to the man than the ball, *i.e.*, stop him, and trust to subsequent skill and luck to get the ball; you may pay more attention to the ball than the man, *i.e.*, try for the ball with your foot, and chance the man; you may combine these methods, *i.e.*, impede the man with your shoulder, and hook the ball away from him with your foot.

Circumstances must guide you in your choice of method,

BUT THE THIRD IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE AND COMPLETE.

By the first, the possessor has almost as good a chance as you of nipping on to the ball; and, in any case, you are not left free to dispose of it, as he may, if quick and determined, impede and perhaps dispossess you. By the second, if smart and neat, you can obtain the ball, and dispose of it unhampered, but there is always a chance of the possessor eluding your foot, or rushing the ball past it. By the third, you not only stop the man's way, but have a very fair chance of getting free with the ball; and, even if he eludes you, you have probably delayed and hampered him.

You must be quick, decided, and energetic.

MAKE UP YOUR MIND THAT YOU SIMPLY WILL HAVE THE BALL.

There is a vast difference between vague-minded and determined tackling. At the same time you should avoid wild rushing. Occasionally it pays to rush; that is a matter for judgment. But in general you will find it more effective to get well alongside and in touch with the man, and then choose the most opportune instant to impede and dispossess him. Board him rather than ram him. That does not mean you should delay or wait on him, only that you should get well to him before tackling.

In trying for the ball, be sure and put your foot stoutly and determinedly behind it, so that your leg be not brushed aside. Make your engaged leg a very pillar of resistance.

In impeding the man, use your weight to the best advantage—

RATHER BY LEANING, HOWEVER, THAN BY CHARGING,

especially, by the way, as most referees nowadays give a "foul" in the case of a hard charge, however fair.

Be sure and watch your man closely, with a view to anticipating his movements. But in the actual tackle you must keep your eye on the ball. In a foot to-foot combat the party who watches the ball the more intently generally manages to obtain possession of it. Wild, vague shoving is at a discount. The ball is what you want, therefore keep your eyes on it; you can at the same time see a lot besides out of the corners.

THERE IS ONE MOST IMPORTANT POINT TO GRASP.

You must always so regulate your most determined tackle that if you miss it you can return to the man with the least possible delay. If you rush too much you are liable to be carried right out of action for some fatal seconds. A worrying style of procedure can be made just as decided and strong, and never leaves you so that you cannot turn and at him again. This applies particularly to half backs, but also, as a general rule, to backs.

As a corollary, be sure never to leave the man you are tackling; if you miss him, round and after him again. Half backs especially should stick to their man like glue. If your man passes the ball, and you can do nothing but impede him,

BE SURE AND IMPEDE HIM EFFECTUALLY,

so as to keep him out of action for the repass: that is, supposing you need not leave him to go after someone else. Remember that the whole theory of combined defence depends on not allowing the enemy to out-number you at any point. If you miss and leave your man, one of your units of defence is likely to be opposed to two of the hostile forwards.

The best way to learn the mechanical part of tackling is to practise it "on the slow." You can pick up much from watching the methods of good tacklers, and from trying experiments in games. But if you find you do not improve, get one of your pals who can tackle to come and give you a lesson. Dribble the ball up to him slowly, and let him tackle you slowly and gently, so that you can see each step of the process. Then let him run the ball towards you for you to have a go. If you are intelligent, and work things out, you will soon find where you are wrong, and how to correct your faults. Notice especially how your teacher disposes of his weight and places his feet.

AIM AT BALANCE

and at being strong on your legs. It is wellnigh impossible to reduce the whole art of kicking to words or to system. But a few scattered remarks may be of use to you.

Perhaps we had better consider a few typical sorts of kick, and see how they are done.

The short pass, or pass of moderate distance, such as from one forward to another, or from a half-back to a forward, or between the half-backs, or occasionally between the backs and half-backs, may be made in almost any way. The one thing needful is that it be accurate in strength and direction. It is made with any convenient part of the foot, but you will notice that good players use almost entirely the outside of the instep of the foot nearest to the prospective receiver. This is found to be

THE MOST ACCURATE AND CERTAIN METHOD—

a fact worth noting. The action is rather a push than a kick. The great thing, however, is to be able to make a short pass with certainty and accuracy however you are going and whatever your position. Nothing but practice can give you this power.

The long pass along the ground from any part of the field by forward, half-back, or back is probably best made with the full front of the instep. The centre of the ball at the moment of impact should be on the lower part of the foot that shows when you are wearing dancing pumps; sometimes, perhaps, a little lower, on the place where the bow is sewn. The toe must be bent well down so that no lift is given to the ball. The force is got from the swing and muscular action of the leg. It is as well to keep the body rather forward and over the leg. This helps to avoid lifting. But when extra force is required you must get some body-weight behind the ball.

FOLLOW THROUGH AFTER THE BALL,

keeping the foot low along the ground, and let the weight of the body help behind. The pace you are going when you kick no doubt adds force. One can merely hint how the thing is done; accurate description is too intricate, even if possible. This low drive is also used in shooting at goal. The difficulty is to keep the ball down, to be accurate in direction, and yet

impart sufficient force. Here again it is practice, practice.

Long-kicking in the air is confined almost entirely to the backs. Occasionally a half-back finds himself obliged to kick hard in pure defence, and the goal-keeper, of course, has some punting-out and place-kicking to do. For convenience, however, we will consider only the case of the backs.

A back's most important duty is to clear, *i.e.*, to get the ball away from the region of his goal. His kicking must therefore, as an essential, be safe and strong. The worst mistake he can make is to miss; the next worst, to foozle his kick. But in addition to this all-important defensive work, he has to use his best endeavours to feed his forwards, *i.e.*, give them chances of getting away. This means he must avoid, as far as he can, wild, erratic, high-soaring kicks, and what is termed over-kicking, *i.e.*, sending the ball too far.

CONTROL OF THE BALL.

In a game the ball comes to you in all sorts of ways, on the ground, bouncing, in the air, fast and slow, straight and curling, and so on. You often have to make the best you can of a difficult position. But the art of certainty in kicking consists in making everything as easy as possible by getting in the right place and choosing the right instant. Judgment and timing, in fact. Always be as dead behind the direction of the ball as is possible. The direction you wish to make the ball go makes it impossible to kick always straight down the line from which the ball is coming. But the straighter the ball is coming the easier is it to kick; the more it is crossing you, the more difficult Always, therefore, be well behind the ball. Often you have time to stop the ball and arrange an easy kick for yourself. Do this when you can, but be sure never to risk being rushed.

You will often have to kick for home and glory with no idea save to clear as best you can. But

ALWAYS TRY TO AIM SUCH KICKS OUT TO THE WINGS

rather than straight down the ground.

In making a hard, long kick try to keep the ball from soaring. The best kicks of this kind travel about the height of a cottage. You should kick with the full front of the instep, as aforementioned, and get all the body-weight you can into the effort. Urge after the ball, as it were. The engaged foot should, I think, be close to the ball at the moment the disengaged-foot meets the ball. Any form of sprawl diminishes your leverage. Moreover, if you meet the ball too far in front of yourself the difficulty of keeping it down is increased; while if you let the ball come too much on to you power is lost.

FEEDING FORWARDS.

Ability to feed your forwards depends on accuracy in strength and direction. This accuracy can be acquired in one way only—by continually trying to put the ball where you want to every time you kick. You can improve yourself no end by organising practice with three or four friends. Stand at various distances apart and kick the balls to one another, aiming at accuracy every time. Remember it pays to practise under adverse conditions, such as wind, rain, and mud; or with a light ball on a hard, rough ground.

If you can command such a thing as a disused racket-court, or a yard with a high wall on one side, there is no better practice than a species of football-fives. With tennis shoes and a small ball you get the feel of nicety and accuracy more readily than with heavy boots and a full-sized ball; and when you once get the feel you know what to try for, and gain confidence.

C. B. Fry

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

C. M'C.—(1) In sprinting, the head ought to be somewhat bent forward over the chest. If the head is held back the trunk tends to incline backwards, which is a wrong position. The trunk ought to lean forward; if it leans back its weight is poised in a contrary direction to that in which you are going, and thus not only acts as dead-weight drag on your pace, but makes your action high stepping and pump-like, instead of low and sweeping. American trainers who excel at producing and developing sprinters make a great point of "head down and forward." At the same time, several first-rate sprinters keep their heads back, but they would be faster if they adopted the position advocated.—(2) The editor tells me that he has an article on cross-country running in hand for publication early in the New Year.

W. R. C.—I do not believe in strict training for football. All you need is to be in good condition and have a couple of games a week—one match and one practice game. To get into good condition I advise you to do Sandow's dumb-bell exercises for half-an-hour every morning before breakfast. You must do the lot. You will find a chart and all instructions in Sandow's book, "Strength, and How to Obtain It." The exercises recommended in Alexander's "Physical Training at Home" are also excellent. If you follow Sandow's course for a month you will be surprised at your muscular fitness. The best way to improve your wind is to take a bit of a run every day. The best time is about half-past five. You need only run about a quarter of a mile. You will soon lose the "pumped" feeling. Do not over-do either dumb-bells or running.

M. J. Hart.—Two wickets with the last two balls of one over and another with the first of the next counts as a "hat trick."

Ernest Williams.—If you consult the rules of Association football you will see that the case you mention is specially provided for. The side that is not kicking off may not cross either the circle-line in the centre of the ground or the half-way line till the ball is kicked off, and the kick-off is not when the whistle blows, but when the ball is set in motion by the side kicking off. The referee should have ordered a fresh kick-off.

C. B. F.

To the Editor of
"The Captain".

29.9.99.

Dear Sir, Why not ask your readers who want information about Football, Cricket or Athletics to write down shortly; clearly and precisely what their difficulties are, what they do not understand, and what they want to know.

I could then pick out the points that need elucidation, and write seasonable articles giving practical advice in time to be of use.

My articles are likely to be of more value if I know beforehand what your readers want. I can also consult other eminent scholars. The extra trouble involved I will give to "The Captain" as a Xmas present

Yours truly
C. B. Fry.

[I am sure my readers will be delighted to avail themselves of Mr. Fry's kind offer. Let all who require advice on Football, Cricket, or Athletics put down their wants on paper, and address their letters to "C. B. FRY, Esq., c/o the Editor," in the usual way. Do not run to unnecessary length, and stick to one subject on one sheet of paper.—ED. "CAPTAIN."]

THE BRITISH HAD NOT THE LEAST COVER WHERE THEY STOOD, YET NOTWITHSTANDING, THEY FORMED IN ORDER AS COMMANDED, AND FIRED WHEN THEY WERE TOLD.

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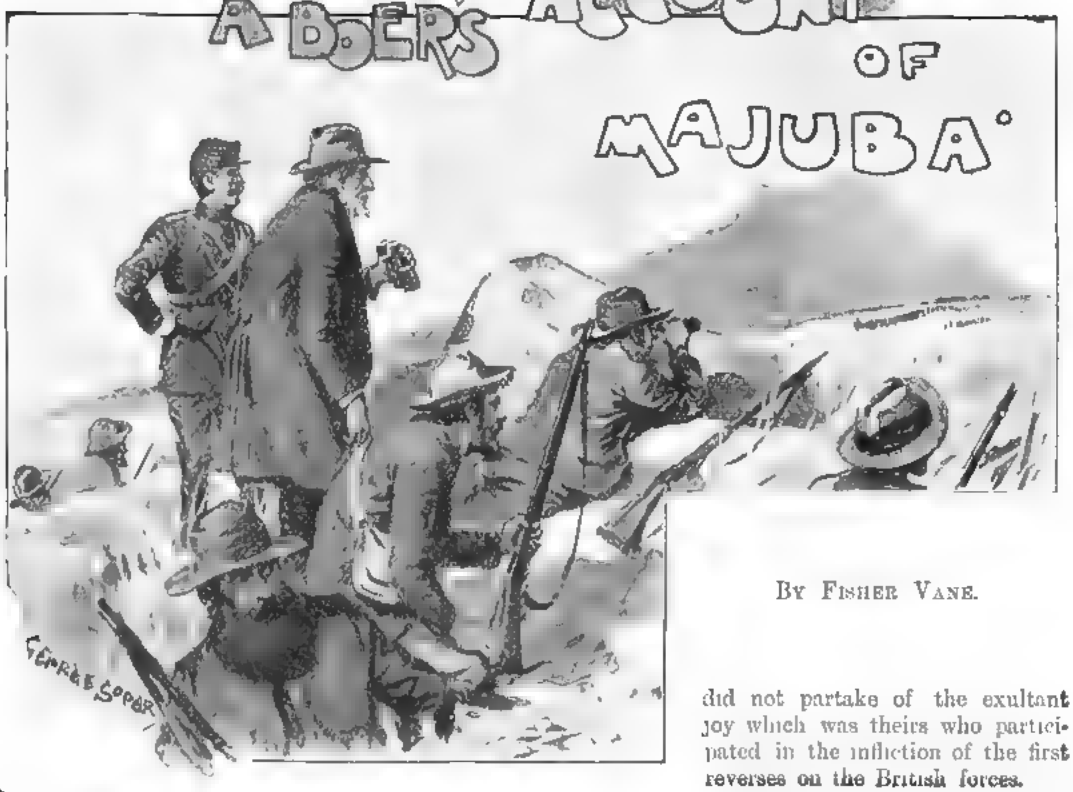
A BOER'S ACCOUNT OF MAJUBA



By Fisher Vane.

When I was out in the Transvaal a year or two ago, I prevailed on Carl Jooste, one of my mining mates, to give his experience of the late Boer War—that is, the 1880-1 trouble. As I do not profess to be *au fait* with all the ins and outs of these stirring times, the reader must not hold me answerable for any historical discrepancy which may creep into the following account. Let him attribute the errors to the narrator, and not to the writer, of this episode.

Carl Jooste had been a transport rider between Kimberley, the Free State, and the Transvaal, and was engaged in this service on the outbreak of hostilities. Being a burgher of the Transvaal, he was called upon to place himself in the field to afford gun practice for the invader, or to avail himself of the gun practice the latter afforded, as the case might be. Carl was not a fierce anti-Britisher, nor was he enthusiastic at the prospect of sport—transport riding was more profitable. A mate of his, likewise a burgher, held similar views on this point, so they both disregarded the brotherly call to arms. In consequence they did not partake of the exultant joy which was theirs who participated in the infliction of the first reverses on the British forces.

Their tardiness in responding to the appeal to come to the front did not pass unnoticed. They received a further command to present themselves at headquarters without delay. Failing compliance by a certain date, they would be treated as traitors for refusing to take their place in the ranks of the patriots, and would be liable to be shot down at sight. This message quickened their pulses, their steps, and their patriotism. They made for the scene of action. On their arrival they were summoned to the tent of the general. While closeted with Piet Joubert a heated altercation arose. Joubert on his part severely animadverted on the dilatoriness of the transport riders in taking up arms for their country; Jooste, on his part, gave the commander a bit of his mind regarding the war and its causes, and the absurdity of the republic measuring strength with the English.

Such an unheard-of scene could not have taken place before a commanding officer of the British Army, but the Boers are all an independent lot; each thinks himself as good as his neighbour—and, of course, as good as his general. Jooste's free speech went unpunished; and he stalked forth from his superior's presence unabashed.

Bronkerspruit had already become historical, but Jooste had his share in the engagements of Laing's Nek and Majuba. His account of the latter was so interesting that I may well be excused telling a well-worn tale.

The little army of Boers was encamped about the hill. They were momentarily expecting the arrival of the British in force, eager to avenge the slaughter of their comrades; and they were beginning to think their victories might prove dearly bought. The leaders were gathered together on the kopje to catch the first glimpse of the avengers and take steps for their safety accordingly. The majority of the burghers, too, had taken up positions on the hill, and were examining the horizon for the first signs of the enemy.

When Colley and his men came in sight the Boers were in mortal terror. Oom Paul called on them to kneel down, while prayer was offered to the Almighty for guidance and deliverance. After prayer it was freely debated whether fight should be offered or safety secured by flight. Many of the men were already preparing to retreat. Those in charge of the wagons at some distance from the hill began at once to make tracks, and the more faint-hearted followed.

Kruger earnestly exhorted the men to stand firm for their country. They had on previous occasions been in as great danger, expecting utter defeat from the enemy; but Providence had always saved them, and God would yet come to their aid. They knew not in what manner, but let them only trust in God, and all would come right in the end. His words were reassuring, and not without effect.

Some, however, urged that the force approaching was only the advance guard of the main body, and it would be madness to attempt resistance. This was practically the opinion of everybody. They were firmly convinced that a much larger body of troops was behind, and they would have an army to combat. That five or six hundred men would attempt to conquer them never entered their heads.

The chiefs held a council of war. Piet Joubert was asked whether he was willing to fight or not. He told them he did not care whether he fought or retreated, he was as ready to do one as the other, and would abide by whatever decision was come to. Paul Kruger thought that, as the English were yet a long way off, they could not injure their chances by waiting to see what the enemy's intentions might be. If they had to run, there was plenty of time, and the little delay would not entail much more risk. It was agreed to wait and act according to circumstances. Groups of burghers, without awaiting the result of the consultation of their leaders, were gradually disappearing, most of them no doubt thinking that the rest would immediately follow. They did not follow. They awaited the advance of the British with mingled feelings—and trusted in Providence. The little band they saw in the distance consisted of barely six hundred men. They halted, apparently to decide on their next step.

After nightfall a surprising thing occurred. The English divided into two bodies; one remained behind, the other advanced to the hill round which the Boers were posted. What possessed the English general to divide his mere handful of men was more than the Boers could divine; but it raised their hopes, and their spirits revived. Dispelling now all thought of retreat, they determined to make a stand.

It seemed to be General Colley's intention to take the Boer position—a position they had not the slightest intention of maintaining because of its exposed situation. He made a slight détour, during which the mass of Boers reoccupied the slope, and scattering, concealed themselves among the sparse bushes and behind the boulders which studded the hill side. Nothing was further from their thoughts than occupying the summit as a position of offence or defence, so that when Colley and his men scaled the hill, they met with no opposition. When they reached the top, not a soul was visible of the many who were there but a few hours before. There was no greater mistake made—except that of staying on the top when they got there.

Of course, the firing began at once. The British had not the least cover where they stood, yet notwithstanding, they formed in order as commanded, and fired when they were told. The absolute lack of common sense displayed in trying to hold such ground, or effect any blow upon their opponents from such a point, would have been ludicrous if it had not been so serious.

The whereabouts of the Boers was only indicated by the little puffs of smoke which continually arose from their places of concealment, to the accompaniment of the crack of the rifles. As Jooste remarked, "The engagement was not a battle; it was a pigeon-shooting. The Englishmen simply stood on the hill-top and made cock-shots of themselves for us." I may as well continue here in Jooste's own words, simply smoothing down his rugged English. Here they are.

"The only order that they appeared to get, was to fire a volley; and they fired the volley—over our heads. They had nothing but puffs of smoke to aim at. All they had to do was to obey the word of command and waste their ammunition;

and they wasted it while we cut them off one after the other. When the volleys rang out the bullets whistled past us, and buried themselves harmlessly in the ground. As opportunity offered, our men moved cautiously from rock to rock, getting nearer and nearer the rapidly diminishing party to improve the prospect of potting their game.

"Still, it was wearisome fighting under cover; there was no excitement in it. We had just to watch our chance, and fire when we could—round the corner. The English kept dropping one by one, and we kept creeping closer. If they had run I should not have blamed them—for there is a sight more sense in running away than in standing up to be shot down by a lot of men you cannot see.

"As for their straight shooting, I had some chance of judging that. We diverted ourselves by putting our hats on the ends of the guns and raising them just above the tops of the rocks which sheltered us. If the soldiers made any mistake, it was in supposing that there was a head inside the hat; for if the hat did not go rolling down the hill, it never missed getting two or three bullets through it. That shooting was quite good enough for me and those that were with me. We took care not to expose ourselves needlessly—or for the fun of the thing.

"So far as I recollect, only two or three of our men were killed. One of them fell at my side, but it was his own fault. There were seven or eight of us lying behind an enormous boulder. A hot-headed youth of about eighteen we kept in the middle. The outside men popped away round the corners of the rocks whenever they could, and the youngster chafed against being kept right behind the stone, unable to get in a shot. He made several attempts to get up, but we pulled him down, telling him he was a young fool. He fumed and swore because he could not shoot any of the *verdomde rooineks*, and at last he said he would have a go, whether he was shot or not. We tried to dissuade him, but it was no use—he would not listen; so we stopped bothering and let him have his own way.

"I SAW A YOUNG BOER RAISE HIS RIFLE AND TAKE DELIBERATE AIM AT SIR GEORGE COLLEY."

"He jumped up with flashing eye, and looked defiantly over the shoulder of the rock. He brought up his rifle pretty smart, and took aim at the hated *rooineks*. He was not quite smart enough. Before he could pull the trigger, a discharge rang out, and he toppled over with half-a dozen bullets in him. He did not want to have any more shots.

"As to the action of the English in standing so long on the hill-top without the least protection, it is quite beyond me. Whether it was Providence or imbecility that ordered it, it is not for me to say; but it must have been one or the other. I am inclined to call it darned tomfoolery myself. At last Colley stuck a white handkerchief on his sword and held it up. Then we scampered up the hill and surrounded what were left of the brave fellows who had stuck so well to their gallant but woefully

misguided general. They had laid down their arms. They were beaten again, but no one will get me to say they were disgraced. Some were squatting on the ground, some kneeling by their fallen comrades, while others stood sullenly by, either gazing furiously at us—a lot of ignorant farmers—or wearing a don't-care-a-hang sort of expression. The ground was thick with dead and wounded. As General Smit ran forward, he called on his men to cease firing, while the other leaders rushed hither and thither telling their men the battle was over, and no more blows were to be struck.

"In the midst of all this confusion, as Smit was advancing to the English commander to receive his sword, I saw a young Boer raise his rifle and take deliberate aim at Sir George, at a distance of about eight yards. Before the act of submission was completed, Sir George Colley fell dead. He had been wounded, I believe, in three places, before the fatal shot was fired, and had lost a deal of blood. Whether his death was a merciful deliverance for him is a matter of opinion, but the fact remains that he was brutally murdered. His assassin was a youth of seventeen. He escaped the immediate punishment of his crime, but he got his deserts. Little more than two years after, he was killed by a Kaffir up country.

"The biggest surprise to me was that the English troops who were left behind did not stir a foot to help those who were being shot down—obeying orders most likely. Probably the general's pride prevented him sending for them—he wanted to retrieve his former defeat, and gain additional credit by employing only half his troops.

"There was nothing whatever in this affair to make the Boers cocky, for they had really little better than a parcel of fools to deal with. If any of them say that the English are not good shots because they did not kill many—well, don't believe them, that's all.

"The reason the English did not kill more of us was that they could not see anybody to kill, and I defy any man to kill what he cannot see.

"Our men, now, could not help but hit; they had every chance, for they had a crowd to fire into the middle of, and the rocks gave them support for their rifles into the bargain. The number of killed on each side was no criterion of their merits as marksmen.

"Now that was the fight—if you like to call it a 'fight'—at Majuba."

BLACK ART.

For many weeks the chemist plied
His brain in cellar murky.
I raised my hat, and stept inside,
And asked, "What make you?"—
He replied,
"My friend, I make a turkey."

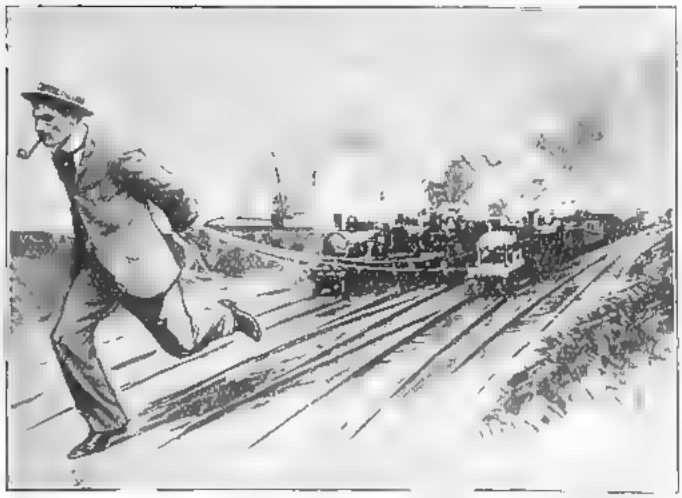
Pestle and mortar night and day,
He thumped in manner jerky.
Vermilion acids, gases grey,
He bottled up. "That's not the way,"
Said I, "to make a turkey!"

"This sovereign dye for cleaning hats,"
Said he, now looking perky,
"I sell to simple plutocrats
Like you for twelve-and-six—*and that's*
Enough to buy a turkey."

THE NEW GULLIVER'S TRAVELS.—III.

By W. W Mayland

Illustrated from Photographs by Alfred Johnson.



USED TO DRAG THREE TRAINS ABREAST.

Having settled the Boer question by effectually frightening all the war-like spirit out of Oom Paul, I returned to England to find that it was winter-time. The ground was covered with snow; fog was causing frog-in-the-throat. Winter said he'd be hard to us this time.

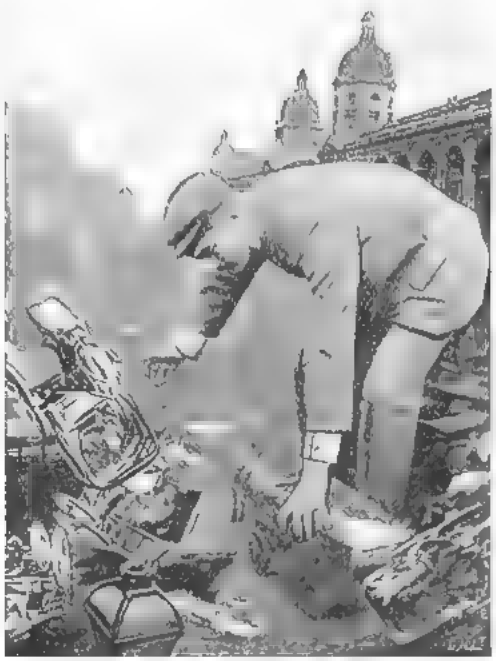
I caught a cold whilst clearing the snow off the top of St. Paul's, and, as the doctors said I had better put my feet in mustard and water, I hired for that purpose the biggest swimming bath in London, and obtained several van-loads of mustard from *Cold*man & Co. (Ha, ha!—Atishoo! Joke!) A special heating apparatus was laid on, the water was boiled, the mustard was thrown in, and thus I cured my cold. As I had to put my legs through the roof, however, the rest of me caught a chill while my feet were getting warm. However, I swallowed a barrel of ammoniated quinine, and GOT WELL AGAIN VERY SOON.

About this time they needed some additional assistance at the G.P.O.

"We," said the Postmaster-General, "need your help almost as much as the army did, Mr. Gulliver."

I said I would go along and see what I could do, and they found me very obliging (they declared, indeed, that I was as useful as ten elephants) until, being in a hurry one day, I began to chuck vans and horses about a bit recklessly. Upon this the postmen said I was taking the bread out of their mouths, and drew up a petition against me. Hence I received THE SACK—*I*, William Orange Gulliver!

Never mind; I took care that they paid me, and I soon got another job. A railway company approached me, and offered me a large sum to help them with their Christmas traffic. I accepted their terms, and used to drag three



BEGAN TO CHUCK VANS AND HORSES ABOUT RECKLESSLY.

trains abreast when there was room. When there wasn't, they simply made up a train about a mile long, and I pulled that until the engine-drivers went on strike, when, of course, I HAD TO LEAVE.

It was shortly after this that Her Majesty consented to lay the foundation-stone of a new suburban theatre on one condition only—"if Mr. Gulliver will hold his umbrella over everybody—that being so much better than a tarpaulin, which shuts out the view."

I hastened to comply with Her Majesty's behest, and the Queen KNIGHTED ME FOR MY TROUBLE.

"IF MR. GULLIVER WILL HOLD HIS UMBRELLA OVER EVERYBODY."

Now, a plain "Mr." can exist on a few thousands (say thirty) a year, but when he gets a title he must live up to it. You see, I always had a very expensive appetite—couldn't eat anything except larks' brains. You can imagine what a lot of larks they had to catch to supply a man of my bulk with sufficient food for one meal—let alone a month.

I spent all my money on larks' brains, and having come to the end of my resources, hit upon a brilliant idea. Such an idea—such a pretty, little, simple idea! I went down to the Minories (in the East of London, you know), and, having dug a trench round the Mint, and undermined it in all directions, I lifted it up and carried it bodily away in my arms.

I CARRIED THE MINT AWAY IN MY ARMS.

They wired down to Aldershot and told the army to come up and catch me. Away I raced to the coast—it wasn't far for a man with my legs—and then, determined that they shouldn't have the Mint if *I* couldn't, I flung it into the sea. Then, hastily rolling up my trousers, and taking off my shoes and stockings, I paddled away from my native shores—away—away—away—with the British fleet in hot pursuit.

Now comes the curious part of my adventures. I had just reached the Eddystone Lighthouse—in fact, I was asking its keeper if I might light my pipe by the revolving lamp at the top, when I felt myself GRADUALLY GETTING SMALLER.

Have you ever experienced such a feeling, gentle reader? I assure you it is a most uncomfortable one. The first thing

I knew was that my hat was growing very much too large for my head—I mean—well, you know what I mean. Then I seemed to be shrinking up inside my clothes. I assure you, it was a truly awful sensation. My appearance must have been screamingly funny—a gigantic suit with a man inside it growing *feet* smaller every second.

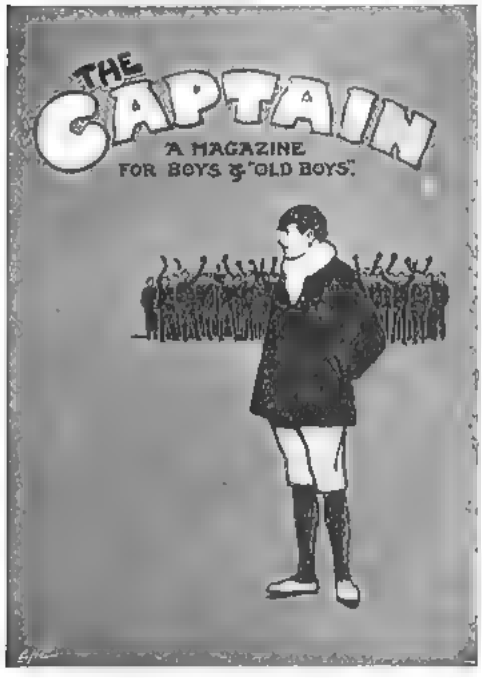
Swiftly my height decreased. Tinier and tinier I grew, until at last, just as a boat from a man-o'-war reached me, I had dwindled into a thing hardly as big as a lead-pencil! And I must hasten to inform you of another very extraordinary thing. As I was slipping down my right coat-sleeve, hey! presto! my suit melted into a thing as diminutive as its owner. But I'll tell you more about my new little self next month.

HAD JUST REACHED THE EDDYSTONE LIGHTHOUSE.

(To be continued.)

"WHAT SHALL I BUY FOR BERTIE THIS CHRISTMAS?"

Why, my dear girl, the very best Present you can possibly give Herbert is



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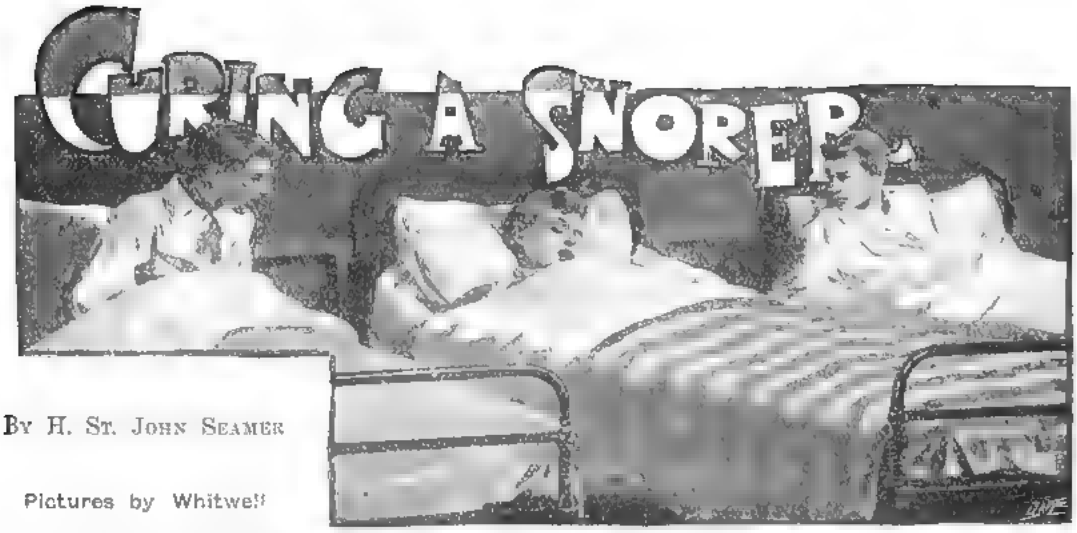
CURING A SNORER



By H. St. John Seamer

Pictures by Whitwell

YOU know how Bailey snores in Dormitory C, and what an awful nuisance he was to us until we got used to him, because we daren't punch his head, or try to make him stop it, since he was cock of the room at that time. It was jolly different, I can tell you, when I was a new boy, and slept in Dormitory A. We soon put a stopper on a chap there who snored, though I don't know that we should have been able to do it then, if it hadn't been for a paper called *Crumbs*.

Old Timson, you know, is awfully down on papers like *Crumbs* and *Shreds and Patches*, and so on, though I can never quite see why. He calls them "pernicious rubbish," and says they "encourage desultoriness in reading." I always remember those two phrases, because of the long words in them—"pernicious" is bad enough, but "desultoriness" is a regular tongue-twister, and no mistake; but you can get a lot of information out of them which is jolly useful to you sometimes, as you'll hear it was in this case.

For my first term, as I said before, I was stuck into Dormitory A with two or three other new boys, and nine or ten older fellows. Perkins was cock of the room, and not half a bad sort, either. When we were sent up to bed I was feeling shy and awkward, for I had not been used to sleeping in a room with a lot of other fellows; but nothing happened in particular until we had got into bed, and the house-master had come in and turned out the light. Then we didn't take long in discovering that Raydon *tertius*, a new boy like myself, snored, and that is jolly awful in a dormitory, I can tell you, because there's no getting away from it.

Some of us had already gone to sleep all right, when he began to wheeze a bit. The older fellows did not seem to mind that, but as I was new to the sort of thing, it was quite enough to keep me awake. He wheezed harder and harder, and then, all of a sudden, he gave a tremendous snort, and starting wheezing again.

Everybody was wide awake in a moment. I heard two or three of the fellows turn over in bed, as though it had disturbed them, but nobody said or did anything at first. The wheezing continued for a minute or so, growing harder and harder; then came that fearful snort, and the wheezing began again as before. It was impossible to get to sleep with that going on, and Perkins wasn't the sort of chap to put up with it.

"Who's making that row?" he asked.

"It isn't me," answered several of us together. Old Timson says that isn't grammar, but it is sense, and it is what we said, anyhow.

"I didn't want to know who it wasn't. I want to know who it was."

Nobody spoke, so Perkins went on:—

"It comes from that end of the room. Now, which of you fellows is it?"

"I think," said young Smallwood, "that it comes from the next bed to mine."

You couldn't call it sneaking, for he was another new boy, and didn't know any better.

"And who is sleeping there?" asked Perkins.

"I don't know," replied Smallwood.

"You don't know?" repeated Perkins. "What rot! You must know!"

"I'm a new boy," explained Smallwood, "and I don't know the fellows' names yet."

Just then there came another frightful snort from the bed in question.

"I can't stand this," said Perkins solemnly. "Wake him up! Wake him up—do you hear?"

Young Smallwood sat up, leaned over, and

shook the chap in the next bed by the shoulder. He turned over, and rubbed his eyes.

"What's the matter?" he asked sleepily. "It isn't time to get up yet, is it?"

"What's your name?" asked Perkins, taking no notice.

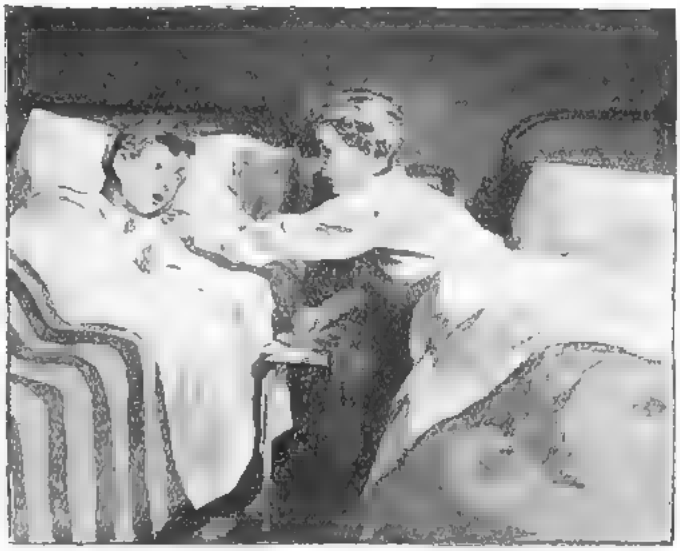
"Raydon," said the boy, waking up properly.

"Raydon, eh?" (It was just the way old Wolff talks.) "Well, what do you mean by making all this row, and keeping the whole room awake?"

"What row?" said Raydon.

"That snortling row," explained Perkins. "Shut it, do you hear?"

"It couldn't have been me," said Raydon, in great surprise that such a charge should have been brought against him. "It couldn't have been me—I've been asleep all the while."



"WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY MAKING ALL THIS ROW, AND KEEPING THE WHOLE ROOM AWAKE?"

"Yes," replied Perkins, "and you take care to let everybody know it. We can't get to sleep for your beastly snoring. You've got to shut it, or I'll come and punch your head."

Raydon didn't say anything more, and, taking advantage of the silence, we tried to go to sleep. But it was no use. We had scarcely time to shut our eyes properly before the wheezing from the other end of the room began again.

"Ff-f-f-f — *Ff-f-f-f-f-f* — Ff-f-f-f-f — SN-R-R-R-R!"

It certainly was jolly awful.

Perkins raised himself in bed, leant over, and reached round for something to shy. He found his slippers, and, aiming carefully at the head of the bed whence the fearful sounds proceeded, sent them flying across the room. They were beautiful shots, for the snorer started up with a smothered cry, as they struck him.

"Shut up, you fool!" said Perkins. "You'll get us all into a row next. And, look here: if you begin that snortling again I shall get up and punch your head for you. I shan't warn you any more."

"How can I help it?" whined Raydon.

"That's your own look-out. If you can't do it any other way you must keep yourself awake. But you've got to stop it somehow."

I suppose he must have lain awake for a while, for I dropped off to sleep, but I suffered from fearful dreams. I was hunting in African forests—that wasn't so bad; I have often thought I should like to be a hunter, and shoot wild beasts—and was pursuing a lion. Suddenly it turned round and roared, making the very earth quiver. I hurriedly took aim, and pressed the trigger, but the gun wouldn't go off. The lion bounded towards me. I tried to run away, but found that I could not move. My feet were glued to the ground. I felt like a fly on one of those sticky fly-papers. With another terrific roar it sprang upon me, and—I awoke, all of a tremble, to find that it was only that miserable Raydon snoring again.

"We can't put up with this," Perkins was saying. "We shall go mad if we are kept awake much longer. The Chinese torture people like that, you know. They cut off their eyelids, or keep them awake some other way, and then in a day or two they go mad, and die in awful agonies. But I don't mean that we should go mad and die in awful agonies. Besides, it would give the school a bad name. He shall stop this row, or I'll know the reason why!"

So he got out of bed, and went and smacked Raydon's head, which stopped the snoring quick enough. Only he began whining and blubbing, which was ten thousand times worse. And he wouldn't stop that, even when Perkins got in a wax, and smacked his head again.

"What on earth shall we do?" said Perkins, at his wits' end.

"I know how he can stop it," said young Smallwood suddenly.

"Then for goodness' sake tell him how!"

"I don't know whether he'll do it, you know."

"Tell us what it is, and I'll jolly soon make him do it," said Perkins.

"Well, I was reading in *Crumbs* the other day

that nobody could snore if they kept their mouth shut."

"You hear that, Raydon?" said Perkins. "All you've got to do is to keep your mouth shut; do you understand?"

"Y-y-y-yes," sobbed Raydon.

"Then see that you do keep it shut," said Perkins, "or I'll jolly well punch your head for you again."

He went back to bed, Raydon's sobbing gradually ceased, and the room became quiet once more. But the quiet didn't last long, for no sooner did Raydon get to sleep (and he went off before we did, because we kept awake to see if Smallwood's plan would act) than the wheezing and snoring began again.

ARMSTRONG AND PERKINS BE-CAN TAYING UP HIS CHIN WITH IT.

So Perkins got up—and he was in a wax this time, I can tell you—and carried out his threat, which only made Raydon start blubbing worse than ever.

"Why didn't you keep your mouth shut," asked Perkins, "as I told you to?"

"S-s-so I d-d-did," sobbed Raydon, "only when I w-w-went to s-s-sleep it m-m-must have opened ag-g-gain."

"Then we'll tie it up for you, so that it won't open a-g-g-gain," said Perkins decidedly. "Here, Armstrong, get the fellow's handkerchief out, and help me tie it round his head and chin."

Raydon regularly howled when he heard this order.

"Shut up, you young ass," said Perkins. "It won't hurt you to have your chin tied up, and it will, as you ought to know by this time, if you get your head punched, which is what I shall do to you if you don't submit quietly."

Meanwhile Armstrong, who was the second biggest fellow in the room, had got out Raydon's handkerchief, and he and Perkins began tying up his chin with it. He did look an object, too, with his face bound up as though he had got the toothache or the mumps, and he didn't like it a bit. But he had to put up with it, for they told him that they would half kill him if he undid it before the morning.

And it answered splendidly. He didn't snore any more that night, and, after a bit, we were all able to get off to sleep, and were not awakened until the bell rang in the morning. But ever afterwards—at all events, as long as I slept in Dormitory A—we made Raydon have his chin tied up every night, so that he couldn't snore if he tried, and so nobody went mad or died in agonies.

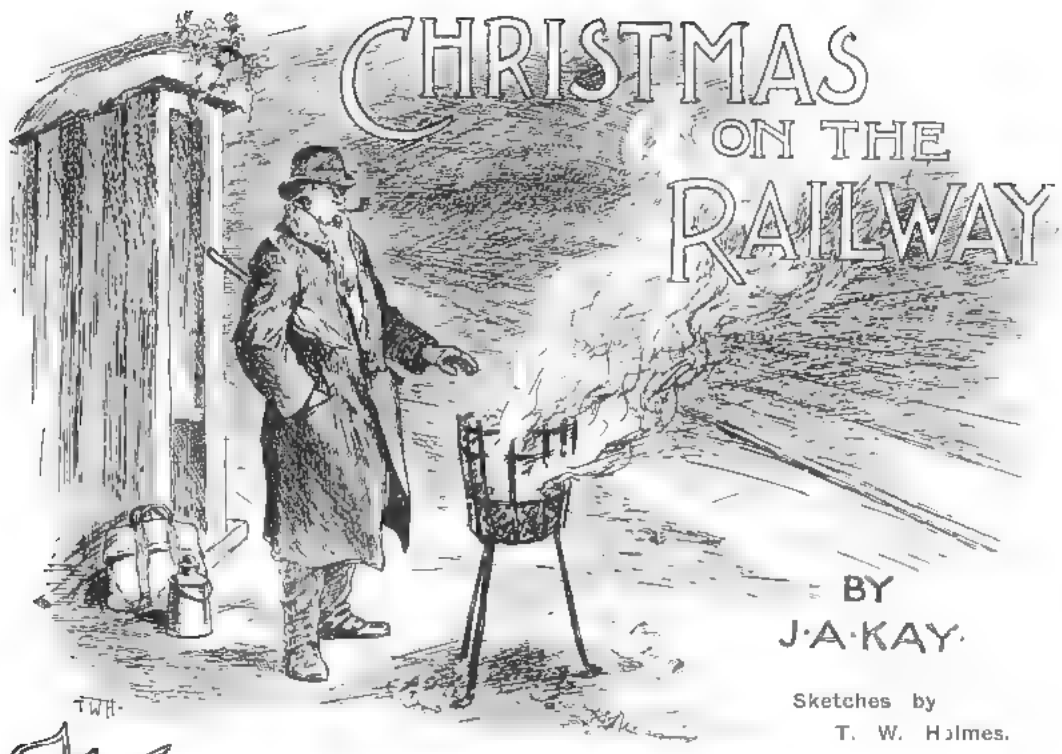
But I thought I should have done when I was put into Dormitory C—for Bailey was worse than Raydon.

He trumpeted instead of wheezing and roaring, but the effect was the same you couldn't get any sleep. It was a great pity we couldn't try Smallwood's plan on him.

However, in a week or so we got used to it, and didn't mind it a bit, which shows that you can get used to anything in time. And so nobody took the trouble to make him tie his chin up.

And old Timson is quite wrong about those papers being "pernicious rubbish." Don't you think so? For if little Smallwood hadn't read them, and known what to do in a case like that, I don't know what would have happened to Raydon; for Perkins wasn't the sort of fellow to put up with any nonsense from him, and he might have had him kept awake until he went mad, and died for want of sleep.

So that he ought to be glad that there are such papers, too.



THE ROMANTIC aspect of railway life and work is apparent at all seasons of the year, but during the winter months, and especially at Christmas time, somehow or other it always seems to be more noticeable. And what with the fogs in the southern counties and fierce snowstorms in Scotland and the north of England, our railways have a by no means easy time of it.

Many people have a sneaking regard for a good old-fashioned fog, and Londoners have often been heard to lament the fact that the modern sort is not a patch on that of fifteen or twenty years ago. Nevertheless, fogs are still so frequent and severe as to very considerably hamper the working of our iron roads at this particular season, despite the precautions and arrangements in force on every railway system with regard to fog-signalling.

When the murky mist shows signs of becoming festive, platelayers and other men employed on the "permanent way" are summoned to perform "fogging" duty. Most of these men are blessed with good constitutions, and without one it is impossible for a man to follow this calling for long When not employed in placing "detonators"—this is the correct term to apply to fog-signals—on the rails, they have to pass the dark, dreary hours as best they can, sitting in one of the modest wooden huts by the side of the line, so well known to all travellers, and endeavouring the while to keep warm by the aid of the bright little fire kindled in front. After several hours' work, food and drinkables, such as tea or coffee, together with a fresh supply of detonators, are sent round to all fog-men on duty. But, despite the unenviable nature of their work, stationed oftentimes in some lonely part of the line on a dark and frosty winter's night, many of the men are said to look forward with pleasurable expectancy to a long spell of foggy weather. As they crouch in their timber shelters, listening to the music of distant fog-signals, they find consolation in thinking of the overtime pay they will get; for on practically all lines the fog signalmen, besides their ordinary pay, receive overtime at the rate of 8d. or 9d. per hour, as well as—on some railways only—an additional bonus of 1s. or 1s. 6d.

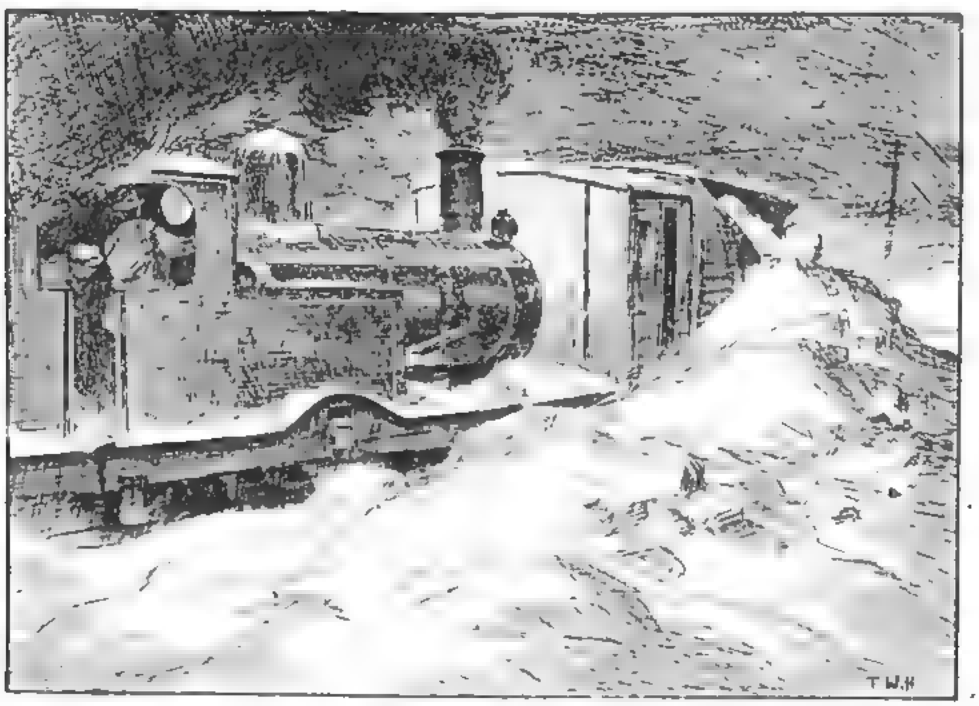
On British railways there are two distinct classes of "semaphore" signals; one of these is termed "distant" signals, and the other "home" signals. When lowered, the "home" signal gives a driver permission to take his train as far as the

next "home" signal, and so on. The "distant" signals, however, are placed on the same posts as the "home" signals, and, when lowered, signify that the next "home" signal is "off"—this is the railway term, meaning that the signal is lowered, showing that the next section of the line is clear. It is by the side of these "distant" signals that the fog-men are stationed. So long as they are "off," signifying that the next section of the line is clear, no detonators are placed on the rail, but as soon as they are raised to "danger" two detonators are laid on the rail, a few yards one from another, in order to warn drivers to keep a sharp look-out for the next "home" signal, as it will probably be showing a red light, meaning that the train must stop.

Possibly many readers have never seen a detonator. It is not so startling in appearance as it is in sound, being, in fact, merely a small circular disc, measuring about 2¼ins. in diameter, and weighing a little over 2ozs. Inside are three small percussion caps and a few grains of gunpowder. Attached to the disc are two narrow strips of lead, to enable it to be accurately fastened to the rail.

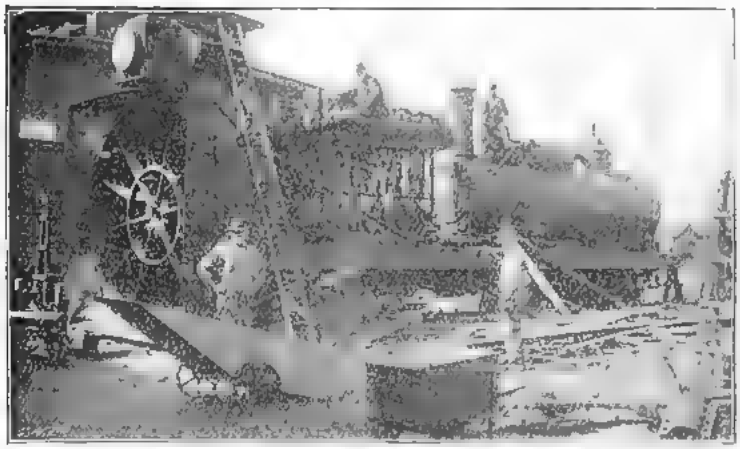
Detonators cost about 9d. a dozen, and on a big line, such as the London and North-Western, it is no very uncommon thing for upwards of twelve thousand to be used in twenty-four hours during foggy weather; while of late years, on the Midland system, over a million have been exploded between September and February, costing annually about £3,250, and in a recent year the wages paid by this department alone amounted to £10,122. On some lines a new system of mechanically placing the detonators on the rails by means of an ingeniously constructed little machine, worked from the fog-man's hut by the side of the line, is being gradually introduced, which, it is hoped, will effect a great saving of life and limb.

To many of my readers, probably, the idea of being snowed up in a railway train seems very romantic, and they only wish that such an adventure might fall to their lot. But, judging from the accounts of people who have been imprisoned in snowed-up trains in the depth of winter, the novelty of sitting for hours in darkness, half-starved, and almost frozen to death, is one more pleasant to read about by the side of a roaring fire than actually to experience. Late in the winter of 1891 a Great Western train was snowed up on the wildest part of Dartmoor from Monday night to the following Wednesday morning. The



CHARGING A SNOW-DRIFT.

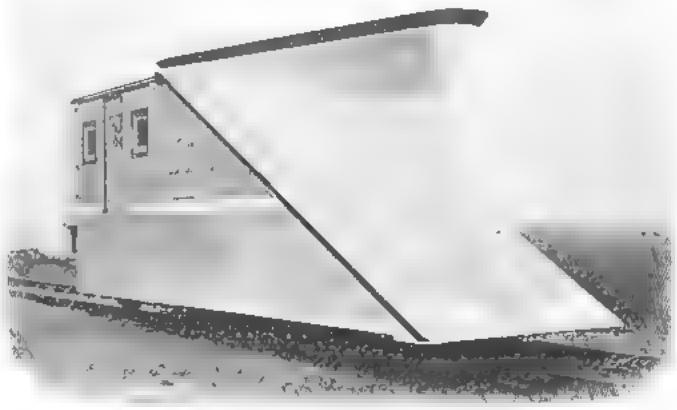
On one occasion several engines and a plough forced their way through a mass of snow 14ft. high, till the plough stuck fast, and remained embedded for thirty-eight hours.



YOU MAY HAVE HEARD OF THE WONDERFUL AMERICAN ROTARY SNOW-PLOUGH. THIS IS A PHOTOGRAPH OF ONE BEING BUILT. IT IS VERY NEARLY READY FOR WORK.

train was the evening mail from Princetown to Yelverton, and, fortunately, there were only six passengers—four men and two women. When liberated, after thirty-six hours' imprisonment, they were found to be nearly dead with hunger and cold. The train, after battling bravely with the storm, at length came to a standstill on account of the depth of the snow. The driver and fireman and guard set to work to try and dig a way out, but without success. Finding that the engine and train were hopelessly choked with snow, the guard set off in the direction of Dousland to try and get help, but, blinded by the snow, soon lost his way, and after wandering about for an hour or so, returned once more to the train. One of the passengers gave a graphic account of their experiences soon after his liberation. "When the guard came back," he writes, "we decided to make ourselves as comfortable as we possibly could under the painful conditions—six men and two ladies huddled together in one compartment—the cold being most bitter, and none of us having anything to eat or drink. We lived the night through, but in what way I can hardly tell. In the morning the wind was blowing as strong as ever, and the snow as it fell melted on the window-panes; and the lamp — our only light—was extinguished at 7 a.m. Just at this time the guard and fireman left us, saying that they were going to try and reach Dousland with the 'staff.'

"Some little time afterwards the driver, who had, I believe, been seriously ill, announced his intention of going to Dousland. We then felt in a particularly sad condition, feeling that our only hope was gone now that the driver had abandoned us. The storm was raging as fiercely as on the previous night, but at 3 p.m. we were agreeably surprised to hear three packers, who had tramped up from Dousland with refreshments for us, knock at our door. We were heartily glad to receive the refreshments, although they only consisted of cocoa, bread and butter, and cake, with a bottle of well-watered brandy to follow. We found there was enough for us to have one piece of bread and butter and a piece of cake each. This was not a very substantial bill of fare for people who had had nothing to eat for over twenty hours, but we were thankful for small mercies. We then awaited the issue of events. The wind was fearful, and we were all bitterly cold. We were nearly dead in the afternoon, and drank all the brandy by eight o'clock. If it had not been for that some of us would have given way. The weather was milder after midnight. About seven o'clock the next morning one of us looking out of the window saw Mr. Hilson, of Horsford, farmer, whose farm is only about 250 yards from where our train



ONE OF THE NORTH-EASTERN RAILWAY'S SNOW-PLOUGHS. (NOTICE THE MEN'S CABIN AT THE BACK.)

(From a special photograph supplied by Mr. Wilson Worsdell, locomotive superintendent of the line.)

SNOWED UP!

The guard is conveying to the passengers the pleasant news that they must spend the night in the carriages, as the train is snowed up.

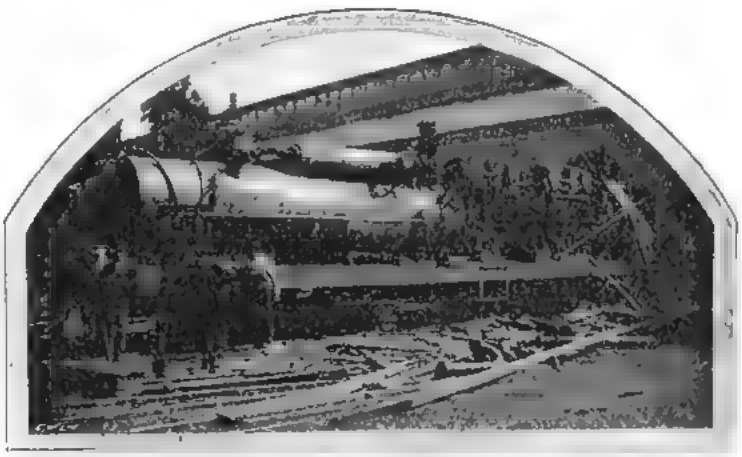
was lying, picking sheep out of the snow, and he assisted in effecting our rescue. The engine of the train, when we left, was completely covered with snow, and the snow had drifted as high as the carriage, with a blank space between the body and the wheels. All the compartments into which I looked—although the windows and ventilators were closed and doors locked—were full of snow above the hat-racks. It was the most horrible experience of my life!"

Numerous other trains were snowed up during this storm in other places in the West of England, and at the company's meeting, the following August, the chairman had a sorry tale to tell of the damage wrought by the blizzard, and "although their earnings had increased £131,000, their expenses were nearly £151,000 more." Curiously enough, exactly ten years previous to this, in 1881, the G.W.R. line had to spend £56,000 in repairing damage done by a severe snow-storm, which was chiefly confined to Berks and Wilts. On this memorable occasion no less than fifty-one passenger trains and thirteen goods trains were buried in the snow. There were blocks in 141 different parts of the system, and no less than 111 miles of snow, varying in depth from three to ten feet, had to be excavated by large gangs of men.

During this same snow-storm the Tring cutting became quite choked up, and many thousands of tons of snow had to be cleared away by several hundred navvies, taken there from all parts of the system by special trains.

In Scotland and the North of England snow-storms are, of course, of more frequent occurrence; and adequate arrangements are made for clearing the line by means of snow-ploughs, whenever necessary; and it is only in the event of very bad storms, such as those just referred to, that traffic is greatly disorganised. The North-Eastern Railway possesses a number of specially-constructed snow-ploughs of great strength, each weighing over thirty tons. Behind the plough itself is a sort of saloon carriage fitted up as a kitchen, mess room, and dormitory, for the use of the men employed in clearing the line. It is no easy matter working these snow-ploughs, and the men in charge of them have, from time to time, had some exciting adventures. For instance,

one wild winter's night in 1886 a snow-plough, forced along by the aid of no less than five powerful express locomotives, set off for Gateshead to clear the line for traffic. For a mile and a-half and over the engines forced their way through a mass of snow 14ft. high, till at length they reached a cutting, and there the plough stuck fast, remaining embedded for thirty-eight hours before it was liberated.



HERE IS ANOTHER STEAM ROTARY SNOW-PLOUGH UNDER CONSTRUCTION. (OBSERVE THE BOILER FOR SUPPLYING STEAM TO WORK THE POWERFUL MACHINERY.)

The Settle and Carlisle line on the Midland system, and the Highland Railway, are both noted for the difficulties to be encountered with snow-drifts, and a story is told of a train which was completely covered up by snow on Blea Moor, to the effect that the party which had set out to look for the missing train only discovered the object of its search by one of the men accidentally putting his leg down the engine's funnel!

In America the railways go one better than we do with regard to snow-ploughs, as in Canada and certain parts of the United States of America it has been found necessary to extensively use powerful steam rotary snow-ploughs. It is a very curious sight to see these huge machines at work; boring their way along in gimlet fashion, so to speak, and sending a stream of pure white snow flying high up in the air out of the top of the plough, and falling at length to the side of the line. It is no very uncommon feat for these marvellous machines to clear stretches of line at the rate of about ten miles an hour; this is, of course, a great improvement on the work of the old-fashioned snow-ploughs, and they are much less likely to run off the line. The coal consumption, however, is very heavy, as one rotary plough alone will get through about two tons per hour!

The increase of parcels traffic at Christmas time on our railways is even greater in comparison than the passenger, and the giving of presents at Yuletide seems to be rapidly on the increase. The railways begin to feel the approach of Christmas quite a fortnight beforehand. The rush of parcels increases daily till the 23rd is reached, and after this they begin to fall off gradually till after the first week or so of the New Year is passed, when the various parcels offices begin once more to assume their customary appearance. At most of the important stations throughout the country temporary offices are erected wherein to carry on the sorting and checking of parcels, thus entailing the employment of a large number of extra hands.

As a very large number of Christmas gifts are in the form of perishable goods, this fact necessitates their being sent by passenger trains, hence the guards of our express and main-line trains have a very busy time of it, what with the sorting of hundreds of additional parcels, hampers, etc. Nevertheless, all this bustle and apparent confusion give most of our railway stations an air of festivity and merry-making which is never so noticeable at any other time of the year; for, although the railways are invariably busy with holiday traffic during July and August, the scenes presented then are not at all akin to those of the few days preceding the Twenty-Fifth of December.

WARDOUR, RUSHING IN UNDER THE LONG CURLING LASH, SMOTE MR. JENKS A BLOW BETWEEN THE EYES WHICH KNOCKED THE FARMER DOWN LIKE A NINEPIN.—*(See page 275.)*

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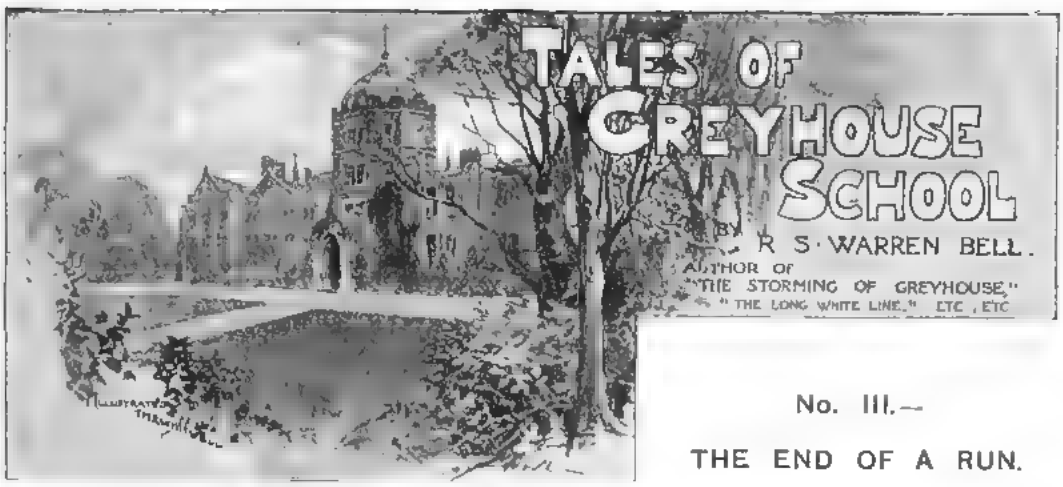


No. III.—

THE END OF A RUN.

[It was shown in the first story of this series, "Sir Billy," how Sir William Percival Travers, Bart., an orphan, is sent to Greyhouse, and how Sir Billy's guardian extracts a promise from Wardour, captain of Greyhouse, that he will keep an eye on Sir Billy. The new Head instructs Wardour to put down the fighting for which the place is notorious, and Wardour faithfully carries out his instructions for a whole half-year, only to break the rule himself (thereby losing the Greyhouse Scholarship of £120 per annum) by thrashing a bully named Eccles, who half kills Sir Billy for neglecting to fag for him properly. In the end, however, the committee of the school allow Wardour to return to Greyhouse for another year. In the second story, "How the Breach was Healed," Hallam, Sir Billy's fag-master, quarrels with Wardour. For some time the coldness continues, until one night Sir Billy is summoned to the study of each to be licked for fighting with Bartlett ("Parsnip"). It transpires that Sir Billy fired up at Parsnip because the latter had made insulting remarks about both Hallam and Wardour. Thus "the breach" was healed, Hallam and Wardour shaking hands cordially after Sir Billy, who was excused his two lickings, had been dismissed to his dormitory.]

I.

IT was not often that a small boy defended the characters of two seniors so valiantly as Sir Billy had done. Needless to say, prowess of any kind is always admired, and the forcible way Sir Billy had administered reproof to Parsnip won him golden opinions from the Lower Fourth, and from their very near neighbours, the Upper Fourth, who shortly expected to find Sir Billy amongst their ranks.

Parsnip went about very sulkily for a week afterwards, and eyed Sir Billy in much the same way as a pugnacious dog surveys another which has got the better of him. It was not in Sir Billy's nature, however, to be at enmity with anyone, and so he decided that he would make it up with Parsnip. This was not easy, for Parsnip had been tremendously chaffed, and this ridicule didn't lead him to regard his late antagonist with much goodwill.

One day, after the usual crowd had purchased its customary amount of dainties from the tuck-shop (the favourite time for buying tuck, I may add, was immediately after dinner—it was hardly a compliment to the Greyhouse cook), Sir Billy quietly approached the counter. He found Parsnip hungrily glaring at the boxes and bottles thereupon. Sir Billy purchased three slabs of French nougat.

"Have a bit?" he said in a friendly way, holding out a slab to Parsnip.

Parsnip grunted, and took the proffered dainty. He was turning on his heel, when his better self (for he had one) came to the top:—

"I say—thanks," he ejaculated, with a half-ashamed look, and then walked away.

Sir Billy sauntered down to the football field with his hands in his pockets, virtuously conscious that he had done the right thing.

About two hours later (it was a half-holiday), just before the 4.30 roll-call, there was a struggling crowd round the playground tap, from which water was obtained in an iron cup. Sir Billy, with his usual modesty, was awaiting his turn. Parsnip came up, and, making his weight felt, soon elbowed his way through the crowd of thirsty kids. Parsnip filled the cup to the brim. His small "pig" eyes, roaming round, lighted on Sir Billy. He had not forgotten the nougat.

"Have a drink, Billy?" he called. "Here"—with vicious lunges in all directions—"clear out, some of you kids."

"No. Go on," said Sir Billy.

Parsnip therefore drank, and then filled the cup again, and Sir Billy drank.

Three days later, much to the wonderment of the Lower Fourth, Sir Billy was discovered helping Parsnip with his Latin prose, and on the following morning, during the "quarter," Parsnip and Sir Billy had an animated game of private "socker" with an old cap in the "quad." So thereafter they became friends, and you may depend upon it that Sir Billy's companionship did not do Parsnip any harm; in fact, from that time Parsnip steadily improved, although he occasionally fell away, and inflicted a little mild torture on the First Form — just to keep his hand in, as it were.

INFLICTED A LITTLE MILD TORTURE ON THE FIRST FORM.

Wardour had a way of observing things and never saying anything about them, and he noted with satisfaction that Sir Billy was certainly settling down to Greyhouse ways in a manner that was good to behold. One day he accosted the young 'un:—

"I say, Travers, can you run?"

"I'm going to have a try," said the small boy.

"Following to-morrow?"

"Yes — going with Parsnip," said Sir Billy.

"Well, mind you don't get fighting on the way," rejoined Wardour, with a laugh; "and mind you don't get—lost!"

The Big Run of the winter term was a great event at Greyhouse, and a thing that Greys were never tired off. Marvellous stories were told in dormitory and before class-room fire of the distances that had been covered in long-ago paper-chases—how Gardiner, captain of the school, and two hares had once been caught in a tunnel when a train was entering it, and how they had just managed to scramble into a man-hole as the London express roared past them. There were other anecdotes equally famous. How, for instance, the three hares were once passing Petershall, a manufacturing town eight miles off, when they were intercepted by a big crowd of strikers, and how the hounds, following hard upon the scent, arrived just in time to rescue their schoolfellows after a tremendous fight. There was an equally exciting memory concerning a black bull, which, once on a time, charged full tilt into the hounds, and brought about some record jumps over a hedge and ditch. And there was still another tale—but I am trying your patience.

The winner of the Greyhouse three-mile race and two other fellows, one notable for his speed, the other for his staying powers, were chosen as hares, and were despatched with the usual twelve minutes start, it having been agreed that they were to begin laying the paper at a sign-post in the middle of four cross roads, about a mile and a-half on the way to Petershall. One of the party, elected for his speed, would lay the false trails, and then rejoin the slow and steady men, who would be scattering the real one.

The hounds assembled by the fives' courts, and in the lane which separated the playing fields from the upper field, in which the football was hacked about during the "quarter," and at other short intervals. (It was considered a great feat to drop a ball from the top of the upper field into the infirmary enclosure.) Several of the masters were running with the hounds, and they led off with the vanguard when the hares' twelve minutes grace had elapsed. Wardour, with one or two other big chaps, had assigned to himself the useful, but hardly ornamental, *rôle* of "whipper-in."

It was a fine day, although cold, and with nothing on but a vest, running smalls and shoes, it seemed an easy thing, *at first*, to get over the ground. Warnings had previously been issued against the eating of heavy dinners, and the fellows who had disregarded this advice began to fall away after half a mile. The too impetuous

hounds had to be curbed by the whippers-in, whose task was not light, for they had to encourage, rebuke, and otherwise use up valuable breath. The finger-post was soon reached, and now the pace settled down to a steady jog trot.

The paper lay very straight for a couple of miles, bar one false scent which led the innocent hound to suppose that the hares had gone bang through Colney Woods. The real trail was soon picked up at the far end of the wood, and then there was some heavy running over ploughed land, which finished up about fifty of the hounds. Those who came through this ordeal were next given a straightforward trot along the towing-path of the canal, across the bridge into the high road, up over a stile, and then straight across country—a great sweep of pasture-land, which did not appear to boast of a single house.

It was now a very long tail, Parsnip and Sir Billy being almost at the tip of it. They must have given up soon after getting over the stile had not a misleading line given them a short spell of rest, which they much needed. However, the real scent was soon picked up again, and on they went.

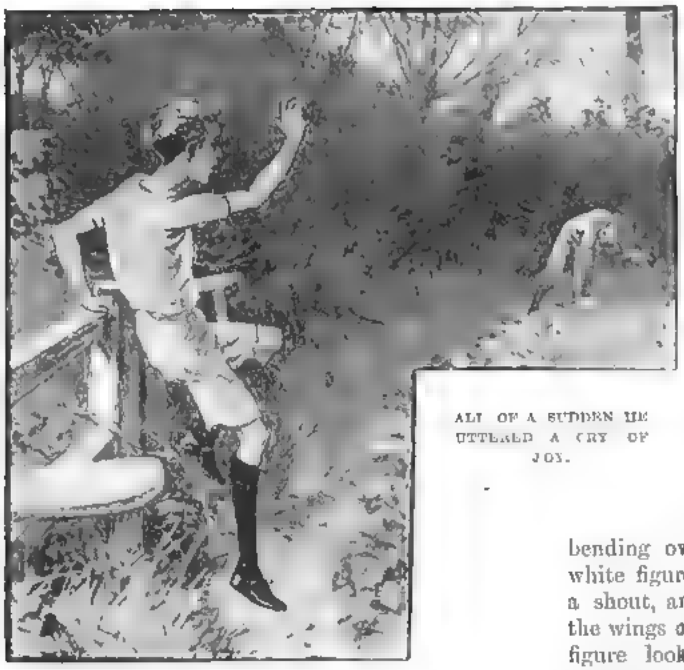
The leaders were by this time three-quarters of a mile ahead, but Parsnip and Sir Billy, and other members of the tail, still struggled on. Wardour, a trifle tired of the arduous task of whipping-in, had forged ahead, so there was no longer any encouraging, kindly voice to urge the tail on to fresh efforts. One by one they stopped, being brought to their last gasp now by a bit of hill, now by a ditch.

"I'm done," groaned Parsnip, falling. "I've got an awful stitch. No more for me."

Sir Billy was almost done, too, but he thought he would struggle on a bit further. He wanted to show Wardour that he wasn't a muff, so he set his teeth and went ahead, now and again gazing despairingly at the white figures far in front of him. He was panting, and his tongue was lolling out, and his knees were trembling, and if a field mouse had attacked him he could hardly have defended himself.

HE WAS LOST IN THIS SILENT MEADOWLAND.

At last he dropped. He lay on the nice, cool, green turf, and had the most refreshing rest (as it seemed to him) he had ever enjoyed in his life. He lay quite still for several minutes, and then slowly got on to his feet again. He looked forward; not a hound could he see. They had all disappeared over the brow of a hill. He looked back—with the same result. He didn't quite know what to do. After some cogitation, he decided to follow the paper, as, perhaps, he would meet somebody who was "done," and walk home with him. He followed the paper for a mile, and then went off on a trail laid by the fast man, which ended abruptly by a little purling brook. Sir Billy turned away in disgust, and tried to get on the right track again. But this eluded him; he searched here and there, and ran to and fro, but it was no good—he scanned the horizon for a school-fellow, but not a Grey could he see. He would have hailed the most unpopular fellow in the school just then with the greatest enthusiasm, but he didn't get the chance. After hanging about for half-an-hour, Sir Billy stopped still under a big oak tree, and went cold and hot all over. He was lost in this silent Meadowland.



ALL OF A SUDDEN HE UTTERED A CRY OF JOY.

II.

THE leaders of the chase were by this time miles away. Long ere this the hares would have headed back to Greyhouse, intent on eluding their pursuers, and getting home uncaught.

It was not likely that any members of the tail would continue to struggle onwards; when you were "done," the usual course was to make for the high road, and try and get a lift home, or, if there wasn't a cart about, pad the hoof. Some fellows who took money with them used to find their way to Littlebury Station and return by train. You must remember that more than half the school followed. Nobody below the Lower Fourth was allowed to run, and, of course, a good many fellows among those who might run if they liked did not care for paper-chasing, and stayed at home "smugging" by the class-room fires, and spoiling book-covers by holding them too near the hot coals. There is always a fair number of fellows in every school who prefer to loaf round and avoid violent exercise—especially such exercise as was involved in the Greyhouse big run. Well, all these facts taken into consideration, there must have been over a hundred hounds scattered about this particular part of the country-side, and it was certainly curious that Sir Billy should not have fallen in with any of them. The probable reason was that he had strayed considerably off the right track.

He was beginning to feel cramped and stiff, and very chilly, It was warm enough *running* in a thin vest, but now he had been keeping still for over half-an-hour he began to wish he'd brought an overcoat with him. Certainly, as he admitted to himself, it would have been a great drag on him, especially over "the plough."

After a time he wandered away from the oak tree, and walked along the hedge until he came to the top of the field. Here there was a stile. The next field contained turnips. Sir Billy sat on the stile and gazed despondently at their dull green tops. All of a sudden he uttered a cry of joy, for there, bending over the first row of turnips, was a white figure. Leaping off the stile he uttered a shout, and ran towards that white figure on the wings of the wind. To his dismay, the white figure looked hurriedly round, and then commenced to run. Sir Billy redoubled his exertions; he simply flew along the rough path which bordered the turnips. Every now and again he cried "Stop!" But the other ran for all he was worth. It is probable that Sir Billy would never have caught that white figure had not a high hedge stopped its progress. Thus brought to bay, the figure turned round, and discovered that the shouts proceeded merely from a boy clad like himself. The white figure was no less a person than our friend Parsnip.

"I thought I was lost," gasped Sir Billy.

"You did scare me," muttered Parsnip.

"Why?"

"WHY?" exclaimed Parsnip, advancing to the first row of turnips, and pulling up the biggest one he could see. "Why, because I'd just got a turnip out, down in the corner there, when I heard a shout, and thought it was a farmer's boy, and so, you see, I cut."

"What did you want a turnip for?" asked Sir Billy, innocently.

"To eat, of course," said Parsnip. "Never eaten a raw turnip? Well, you *are* a kid! I and some other fellows have a turnip every Sunday afternoon."

Parsnip had by this time broken the turnip in half, and was devouring its juicy interior. "Have some?" he said, generously holding out the other half.

Sir Billy eyed the uninviting morsel with some hesitation.

"Go on. It's not half bad," urged Parsnip.

"Hang it! I've eaten worse things than this. You can find heaps of things to eat when you are out on a Sunday afternoon. I'll show you one day."

Sir Billy was very hungry, and so at length he took the turnip and nibbled it, and found it quite appetising.

"Ah! I thought you'd like it," grunted Parsnip, gnawing away at his half with great relish. "It's a jolly sight better than the decayed horse they give us in Hall. But, I say, we'd better be moving. Any idea where we are?"

"Not the least," said Sir Billy.

"Oh! Well, come on! We'll probably strike some of the other chaps."

They got out of the turnip field, and walked over some stubble until they came to a five-barred gate. On the other side of this there was a grassy lane with paper in it.

"Good! Here's the track!" cried Parsnip, "Now we're all right. Hullo! There's a Greyhouse chap coming along. By Jove, it's Wardour! Here, chuck that turnip away, kid."

The two juniors cast the remnants of their meal over the hedge, and awaited the captain's approach. Wardour came along slowly and painfully. His face lit up when he caught sight of our two friends.

"Well, Travers," he said, as he approached them, "I didn't think you'd get as far as this; and you, Bartlett, you're improving."

"Are they caught, Wardour?" asked Sir Billy.

"I'm sure I don't know. I came a cropper over a heap of stones, and cut my ankle rather badly." The others now observed that Wardour had tied his handkerchief round the wounded part.

"Well, we'd better be getting along home," said Wardour. "It's no good following the paper all the way back to Greyhouse; I think I know a short cut. If we get to the left of the osier beds, about a mile from here, we can cross the railway, and save two miles at least."

They had rounded the osier beds, and after leaving the railway behind, had crossed a long meadow which they had reason to believe would take them in the direction they wished to go, when, just as they were passing a hay-stack, they were hailed in stentorian tones. Round the hay-stack came—firstly, a stout man with a big red face, carrying a heavy whip—evidently a farmer; secondly, a big mastiff; thirdly, a farm labourer with a pitchfork.

"Hi, stop!" said the yeoman. "What may you be doin' in my field?"

"I suppose we may walk across your field, if we like?" retorted Wardour.

"Don't you haw-haw me, my young man," said the farmer, advancing a step or two with a very ugly look on his face. "My name is Jenks, and this is my field, and there's no footpath across it, and there's a board in the far corner which says: '*Trespassers will be prosecuted!*'"

"Look here," said Wardour, "we come from Greyhouse——"

"Oh, yes," interrupted Mr. Jenks, "I know

"HI, STOP!" SAID THE YEOMAN. "WHAT MAY YOU BE 'DOIN' IN MY FIELD?"

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where you come from—there's no need to tell me that. You Greyhouse chaps seem to think that all the rest of the world is dirt beneath yer feet, and I'm just agoin' to give you three a lesson."

"You had better be careful," said Wardour; "you will be very sorry for whatever you do. We have permission from all the farmers in the neighbourhood to run over their land——"

"Yes—*from all except me!*" shouted Mr. Jenks. "I'm the only one that stood out. The other fools round here are just tenants, and they give in because the lord of the manor asks them to—he bein' a pal o' your master's, I suppose. Well, now, this is *my* field, and I own it, and I never gave permission to anybody to run over it, and I never will."

"Very well," said Wardour, quietly, "we are trespassing. I will give you our names, and then you can issue a summons——"

The farmer laughed. "Summons? Oh no, you don't, my young chafer! I've had names given to me before, and when I've called on your master to get justice, I've been told that there's no chaps o' those names in the school. Oh no; that game won't do for me."

"I've had enough of your insolence," said Wardour, haughtily; "I am captain of the school, and not likely to mislead you. The names of these two are Bartlett and Travers. Mine is Wardour. So now, perhaps, you will kindly let us go on our way."

But Wardour's tone had stung the farmer to the quick. He was purple with rage.

"*Way!* You go on your way?" he shouted, with an oath, as he raised his whip. "You say another word, and I'll give you the best hiding you ever had in your life, my cock-a-hoop young bantam! Captain of your school! What do I care for you? You're not captain o' me. Now then, I'll just tell you what I'm agoin' to do. I'm goin' to take you three along and lock you up in my barn, and then I'm goin' to fetch the police and give you into custody. Now then, march along quick, if you don't want a dose of this whip!"

Wardour turned on the farmer with blazing eyes. "You dare to touch us——" he was beginning, when the dog uttered a low growl, and the man with the pitchfork advanced a step or two.

The farmer laughed. "It's no use your usin' 'igh words," he said, with a sneer; "I guess we're one too many for you——"

"A dog and a pitchfork too many, you mean," replied Wardour; "you're a brave fellow to fight three defenceless boys with such weapons."

The farmer saw that Wardour was hurt, for the handkerchief round his ankle was soaked with blood, but he had not a vestige of pity in his composition. Indeed, Wardour's words only fanned his rage.

"No more o' your voice!" he shouted, with another curse. "On you go—*march!*" and once again he raised the whip, and again the dog growled.

Wardour perceived that the situation was hopeless. They were absolutely at the man's mercy. He nodded to the two juniors, and they followed the man with the pitchfork.

The farm buildings proved to be quite near. As the procession entered the yard, Mrs. Jenks emerged from the back door. Directly she saw the boys, a look of sympathy passed over her hard-work-lined countenance.

"What's the matter, Bill?" she asked her husband.

"What's the matter doesn't matter to you," roughly replied the man. "I found these three young cubs trespassin', and I'm goin' to lock 'em up, an' fetch the police."

"Oh, Bill, be careful!" cried the good woman. "The little boys must be perished with cold in them bits o' things, and—oh, dear me! the tall gentleman has hurt his foot. Look at the blood!"

"Go back to your pots and pans, woman!" roared the farmer. "Now, then," as he turned to his prisoners, "into that stable!"

There was nothing for it but to obey, and in a few moments the three Greys found themselves securely locked up. They could hear the farmer's wife remonstrating with Jenks, and warning him that he would get into trouble for this, and they could hear his brutal replies. Then there were steps, and the farmer's voice sounded on the other side of the door.

"Listen to me!" he bawled. "I've told my man to saddle my horse, and when it's ready I'm goin' to drive into Belsert and fetch the police; it's not far from here. You cry out, or try to escape, and I'll come and warm your hides for you—so look out!"

Having delivered this surly speech, he turned away and went indoors.

III.

THE three hounds were certainly in a desperate fix—locked up in Farmer Jenks' stable, with the prospect before them of spending the night in a police station. Hitherto excitement and exercise had kept them warm, but, now that they had nothing to do except await the turn of circumstances, all three shivered with cold.

"Well," said Wardour, gloomily, "I led you two fellows into this, and I must say I'm very sorry. By Jove!" he added, savagely, "I should like to have five minutes alone with that brute. I

didn't care a hang for his whip, but the mastiff and pitchfork were too much."

Parsnip seemed the least concerned of the three. There was some hay in the corner, and he went and sat down on it. Sir Billy, whose teeth were chattering, joined him. Wardour was just tall enough to be able to see out of the barred window. "I suppose the old beast's coolly having his tea," he muttered. "I should like to pelt him with his own crockery. His wife's a real good sort, though, and when this is all over I will thank her for what she said."

Keeping at his post by the window, Wardour watched the farm-building and the back door of the house. By this door Mr. Jenks had entered, and from this door, Wardour surmised, Mr. Jenks would emerge when he had satisfied himself with hot toast and tea. The mere thought of it made the captain ravenous.

"Here comes that labourer johnny, leading a horse," he reported to the other two. "I suppose he's going to saddle him, and then old Jenks will ride off to Belsert. I had no idea we had wandered so far away from the school."

Just as the labourer reached the back door the farmer appeared. "Hey, Jim," he called, "it's just struck me that I'd better take a cart, so you go and put the mare in. If I'm to fetch the police," he added, "I may as well have summut to bring them back in." Then he caught sight of Wardour's face gazing at him through the bars of the open window. "Yes, you can look," he cried, shaking his fist. "I'll have the law on you, Mr. Captain of Greyhouse. I'll teach you to talk to me, you cub. You won't come near my land again in a hurry, *I'll* wager."

With a disgusted look Wardour turned away. He was not an adept at bandying words with anybody. He couldn't shout back abuse at this vulgar man. The fact that he took no notice of the farmer must have irritated the latter, for Jenks walked up to the window and peered through at his captives.

"Now, then, get off my hay," he growled, and it is hardly necessary to add that Sir Billy and Parsnip hastened to obey him. "If any o' you three give me *one* word o' sauce, I'll come in and hide you, I will. I don't care a hang who you are."

"You talked about justice just now," retorted Wardour. "I hope you know that what you are doing now is illegal. You have no right whatever to shut us up in this way, and that you will learn very shortly."

The farmer, who had evidently been drinking something stronger than tea, treated him to another volley of abuse, and then went back to the house. Wardour's eyes roved desperately round in search of a method of escape.

Exit was impossible, either by the door or the window; one was locked on the outside, the other strongly barred. But what was this? A ladder leading to the loft above! He determined to explore.

"Here, Bartlett, roll that tub up to the window, and keep an eye open," he said, "and if the old brute appears just warn me."

Parsnip having placed himself in position, Wardour ascended the ladder. To his surprise, he found that the door by which hay was taken into the loft from the farm-yard was open. "Now," thought he, "it would be quite an easy matter to drop to the ground from here, and scoot; but what good would that do? That beast of a dog is sure to be somewhere around, and although I might be able to tackle him myself, these kids wouldn't be anywhere. I'm afraid it's no go," he added, sorrowfully, as he descended the ladder and joined his companions in distress. Another five minutes elapsed before Jim the labourer returned, leading a smart-looking cob, harnessed to a light gig. Mr. Jenks appeared.

"Now, look here, Jim," he cried, "the other cart's down at the smithy in the village. You just saddle Sandy" (this was the horse originally brought into the yard, and discarded in favour of the mare), "and ride down to the village and bring it up. If we've got to take these three young spadgers into Belsert when I've fetched the policemen we shall want something bigger'n this here gig."

Jim having gone to saddle Sandy, the farmer went indoors again to get his coat, hat, and gloves on. Thus the horse and gig were left unguarded.

Then a sudden thought struck Wardour. It was their only chance. He was a man of action if there ever was one.

"Come along, you chaps, up this ladder as fast as you can sprint!"

In half a-minute all three had gained the loft.

"Now, look here," he said, hurriedly, "I am going to drop to the ground, and you two must follow me. I'll see you don't come to any harm. Then we will hop into that trap and make a dash for it. If the dog comes—well, there are plenty of pitchforks about."

He lost no time in carrying out this plan. Dropping softly and silently to the ground, he broke Parsnip's fall by grabbing at him as he alighted, and caught Sir Billy bodily in his arms.

"In case it's wanted," said he, snatching a pitchfork out of a heap of manure. "Now—for your lives!"

All three sped across the yard. Wardour caught up Sir Billy and chucked him into the back of the gig as if he had been a bundle of grocery. "Now,

Parsnip," he whispered. Then he jumped up himself. Seizing hold of the reins and the whip, he set the mare going towards the gate. At this moment the labourer appeared with Sandy's saddle and bridle. Seeing the three boys in possession of the trap, he dropped his burden and ran into the house to give the alarm, charging into the farmer, who was just coming out.

"Mr. Jenks, they've took the gig!" bellowed Jim.

The mare, in strange hands, had jibbed slightly at first, but by this time Wardour had got her to the gate. Mr. Jenks rushed after them with a loud cry, and Wardour, seeing that things were getting desperate, lashed the mare with all his might across her smooth flank, with the result that she simply jumped out into the high road. Wardour had already decided to drive in the direction of Belsert, as Greyhouse was miles and miles further the other way.

"Now, you fool, saddle that horse—quick!" yelled the farmer to his man, and then rushed after the trap.

"*Stop!*" he cried. "Stop, will you?"

For answer Wardour simply waved the whip triumphantly, and administered further—and, under the circumstances, pardonable—castigation to the mare, who was putting her heels up in fine fashion now, and simply flying along the road. As the gig sped round the bend Parsnip and Sir Billy gazed back, and saw the farmer coming out of the farm-yard on the back of Sandy. So now it was a race indeed.

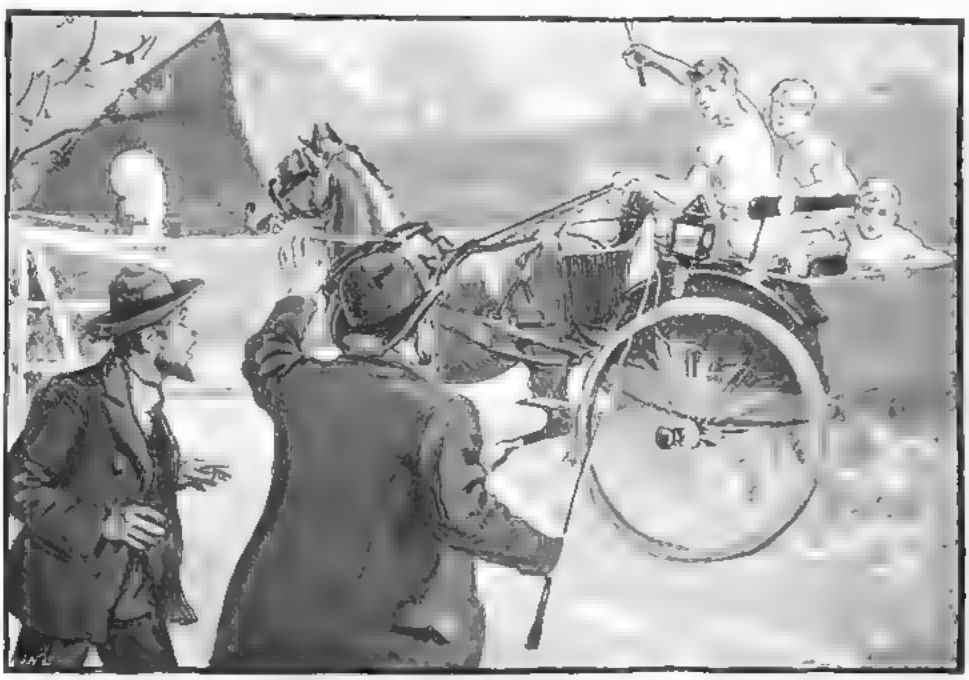
Already the night was falling; not a pedestrian or a vehicle was in sight. The three Greys had got a good start of the farmer, and by far the best horse, but, on the other hand, their gee had to pull a gig and three people, whereas Sandy had only the farmer to carry. The two juniors glued their eyes on their pursuer as he thrashed on Sandy to fresh efforts. Luckily, the road was pretty level just here, so it was a fair field and no favour; but Wardour knew well that there were one or two stiff hills ahead.

On they went, the mare's pace devolving credit on the farmer's judgment when he bought her—she was a rare one to run; but Mr. Jenks, owing to an energetic use of whip and heels, was lessening the distance between them considerably.

Wardour drove with a fairly slack rein. He saw the mare liked to have her head if she was to be kept in a good temper. And the mare, with equine sagacity, knew that there was somebody on the box who took the trouble to study her feelings. Therefore, she did not need any further application of the lash, and raced along as if she were flying for her life.

Now a hill hove in sight. Wardour slackened down to a short canter, whereas the farmer, spurring Sandy in his rage, breasted the hill at full gallop. He was now within a hundred yards.

"I'm afraid it's no go," muttered Wardour, as



"STOP!" HE CRIED. "STOP, WILL YOU!"

he encouraged the mare to smarten her pace. "But, if the worst comes to the worst, I'll fight the beggar. Now, my beauty!"

They reached the brow of the hill, and the farmer was so close that they could hear his ejaculations quite distinctly as he pounded along in their wake.

"*Stop, will you?*" he cried. "Stop! that's my property. Do you hear? That's stealing—that gig belongs to me."

What gave Mr. Jenks further concern was that the mare had been out of sorts of late, and he knew that being sent along at this rate would not do her any good. He had entered her for some steeplechases that were to be held in three weeks' time, and he knew that she would not be able to do much if she were driven at this killing pace much longer. In addition to this, a great desire for revenge was on him. He wanted to send that great whip of his whirling round the bare legs of the school-boys. The thought of the marks it would leave filled him with satisfaction, so again he cried:—

"*Stop!* Stop! STOP!"

But Wardour only waved the whip at him, and urged the mare on to fresh efforts. Down the hill they went at a rare pelt, and the farmer groaned in his fury—if the mare fell, her knees would be spoilt beyond mending. He hammered old Sandy relentlessly, and Sandy unwillingly obeyed the voice and the lash of the tyrant on his back. At the bottom of the hill came another nice stretch of level road. The farmer was within fifty yards of the gig now. A mile hence was situated a little hamlet, and here the road took a sharp and nasty turn round the centre building of the place, which was "The Three Swallows" public-house. The mare was fast tiring, and Sandy was fresh compared to her. Mr. Jenks was catching up materially. It was clear that he must soon be level with the gig. He knew, moreover, that along the village street there were usually grouped at this hour of the evening a number of louts, all of whom were naturally hostile to anyone of the nature of public school boys. These fellows would lend the farmer all the assistance in their power.

"If I can only get through the village," thought Wardour, as the hoof-strokes of Sandy smote on his ear, "I'll take on Mr. Jenks!"

Round the sharp corner they flew, and *bang! crash!* the gig's near wheel struck a dog-cart standing by the door of the public-house. The dog-cart reeled up against the building in a foolish fashion, but the little gig went over. When the owner of the dog cart ran out he found two boys lying on the ground, and the third standing by the wreck of the gig, ruefully surveying the climax of his headlong drive. Just at that moment Mr. Jenks arrived on Sandy, pulled up and alighted all in one movement, and rushed at Wardour.

"Now, then, you young hound!" he shouted. "I'll make you pay for this!" He slashed at Wardour with his heavy whip, but Wardour, rushing in under the long curling lash, smote Mr. Jenks a blow between the eyes which knocked the farmer down like a ninepin.

Feeling much damped by this surprising exhibition of strength and skill, Mr. Jenks slowly rose to his feet, picked up his whip, and turned towards the door of the public-house. He found that he was being regarded by no less a person than Mr. Soames, the well known county solicitor, to whom at this very moment the farmer was indebted for a large loan.

"Good evening, Mr. Jenks," said the lawyer. "This a new amusement of yours—chasing school-boys about?"

Parsnip and Sir Billy were slightly stunned by their fall, but by this time they had risen to their feet and were examining their bruises.

"I'm agoin' to have the law on 'em," said the farmer in a surly fashion, but keeping well away from Wardour, for he had no desire to make acquaintance with the Greyhouse captain's fist again. "Do you think that I'm agoin' to have tuppenny-'apenny school-boys like that trespassin' on my land and then runnin' away with my cart? I'm agoin' to have the law on 'em. Look at that there vehicle," he concluded, with a gasp.

"A very nice gig," said Mr. Soames; "seems to have had a little paint knocked off it" (I should explain that the cob had been got on to its feet again, and that "The Three Swallows" ostler was looking after both horse and trap); "not much harm done," continued Mr. Soames, "except, perhaps, to the wheel of my dog-cart. However, that's all right. I'll pay the damage, whatever that is."

"No!" thundered the farmer, "I'll make their parents pay it, and then they'll have a hot time of it at Christmas when they go home."

"Well," said Mr. Soames, with a smile, "as I stand *in loco parentis* to this young gentleman" (pointing to Sir Billy, of whom the farmer, like everybody else in the neighbourhood, had heard), "I will pay for him. The young gentleman who displayed a knowledge of fisticuffs just now is the son of Major Wardour, of Belsert, and a great friend of mine. The third young gentleman," concluded Mr. Soames, glancing at Parsnip, "I do not know."

Wardour had hurriedly explained what had taken place to the solicitor, who now approached the farmer, and said in a low tone: "See here, Jenks, joking aside, you're in the wrong. You had no right to shut 'em up in your barn;

your proper course was to issue a summons if you found them trespassing. You won't do any good by going to law, and you might get into a great scrape; and if my ward is laid up through having been kept about in the cold with hardly anything on—in that case, Mr. Jenks," concluded the solicitor, "you will hear from me promptly, and in a way that you will not like."

Then Mr. Soames turned to the three boys. "Come along in now," he said to them, "and get something warm inside you, and we will see if we can find you some coats. Good-night, Jenks," he added, nodding to the discomfited farmer; "I think you have over-reached yourself a little. Go home, and don't forget what I've said."

An hour later the head master of Greyhouse received the following telegram: "*Wardour, Bartlett, and Travers lost way, but arrived here safely. Return in morning.—Soames, Belsert.*"

R. S. Warren Bell

(The fourth story of this series will appear next month.)

SOME DOGS I HAVE KNOWN.

By Tom Browne.

THE SHARP DOG—WANTS A LOT OF BEATING.

THE PLUCKY DOG.

A LITTLE SERMON ON CHRISTMAS.

"HERE lies one who meant well, tried a little, failed much"—this, wrote Robert Louis Stevenson in one of his essays, is the best epitaph that any man can deserve. Now, Christmas is the mile-mark of another year, moving us to thoughts of self-examination. It is the time for destroying illusions about one's self. To look back upon the past year, and see how little we have striven, and to what small purpose; and how often we have been cowardly and hung back, or rash and rushed unwisely in; and how every day and all day long we have transgressed the law of kindness, is sufficient surely to take away any smug self-satisfaction we may feel in ourselves and our own lives. If we have "meant well" and "tried a little," we have certainly "failed much."

We are all apt to be too pleased with ourselves, to shrink from seeing ourselves just as we are. Even when we admit a few faults we do so with the secret belief that we are really jolly good fellows at heart. We are always more ready to accept the estimate of those who love us, than to seek out the exact truth about ourselves. If one wants a lesson in humility, surely one can find it in the difference between our real selves and what we appear to our mothers.

The fact is that the real truth is so often ugly and alarming that we hide it away out of sight, and refuse to recognise it. We cannot bear it as it stands.

Don't misunderstand me. I do not wish to make your Christmas gloomy and sombre with thoughts of failure. Far from it. Christmas is a season, from all its associations, whether domestic or religious, suggesting thoughts of joy. Happiness is as much a duty as anything else, and your first duty at Christmas is to be happy. But remember that real, true happiness is never selfish, and if you want to be happy, the best way is not to clutch at every pleasure that you can get for yourself, but to try and make someone else happy. Everyone of you can do something towards this in your own household.

I dare say all of you—or at any rate most of you who read these lines—belong to happy families, but all the same, I want you to think of those who do not. There are so many who, while you and I are enjoying our good time, are having something so different that we can hardly realise it. On Christmas Day, in our great towns, there will be hundreds and thousands of poor people huddled together in bare, wretched rooms, without a fire, without even a crust, to whom the day will be only more wretched and hopeless than usual, since there will be no chance of work or of earning a penny.

"I should like to do something for these poor people," said a boy to me one day, "but I don't have much pocket money, and I never seem to have a penny to spare."

He had just been showing me his stamp album and his latest "specimen," for which he told me he had paid 7s. 6d. Well, I have nothing to say against stamp-collecting. I would have no one give it up, but just think that even half-a-crown out of that 7s. 6d. that represented one stamp would have provided an excellent meal for ten hungry men.

Perhaps you say you have so little money you can spare nothing for these poor, starving people. But you just count up all you run through in a year on "tuck," on games, magazines, stamp albums, or whatever your particular hobby may be.

They are all excellent things in their way, and I would not have you give them up, but they do not spell life. Right outside your particular interests, your own special hobbies, lies the great world of men and women in which you will have to take your place some day soon. May there be many kindly hands to help you when the dark days come!

In the meantime, you can contribute to the general stock of the world's happiness, by helping—in however small a way—the poorer ones around you, and you can help, too, by your own gaiety. Carry your happiness with you wherever you go. The world can do with it. Every happy person is a gain in life. And if you want a good Christmas resolution, here is one for you. Determine to add nothing, not so much as a passing sigh, to the great total of men's unhappiness in your journey through life.

The Chaplain.

By Fred Whishaw.

Illustrated by H. E. Butler.

JONES got us the tale.

"Tell us that yarn of yours about the wolves, Granby," he said. "When they all——"

"Well, don't give it away beforehand," said someone, "if Granby's going to tell it."

"I don't mind," said the latter. "Only remember, all of you, that it isn't a yarn, as Jones is pleased to describe it, but the true story of what actually happened to me.

"I was in the Novgorod Government on business," he commenced, "and occasionally did a bit of snow-shoeing, carrying a shot-gun in case of a hare or a tree-partridge, or so. They were very scarce, however, and I rarely got a shot. Consequently I usually carried no more cartridges than the couple with which my gun was loaded—a very foolish practice which I have since abjured, and which I do not recommend to any of you. Always carry at least half-a-dozen cartridges, even though you are practically certain to have no use for the same. This is a concession to the chapter of accidents which it can hurt no one to make, for half-a-dozen cartridges are no great weight, neither do they take up much room.

"Well, I'm afraid I *was* a duffer. I went out into the forest one afternoon upon my snow-shoes, carrying a gun with a couple of fours, but with no reserve of cartridges in my pocket. I merely intended to take my day's exercise, and the chance of a shot at some stray hare or bird was but a secondary consideration. I wandered for several hours, getting, of course, deeper and deeper into the heart of the forest—a circumstance which gave me no anxiety whatever, for the weather was clear and there was no danger of snow falling to obliterate the tracks of my snow-shoes, and if a fellow cannot find his way home upon his own track, why, he must be unfit to venture outside his own back garden, and had better sit at home and darn stockings.

"There was a little rascal of a tree-partridge whose shrill whistle lured me farther and farther onward.

"Then, suddenly, something happened that changed my dull, almost purposeless ramble into an exciting enterprise, and set my heart beating with all the ardour of the sportsman.

"Something skulked across my path, a large grey creature which at first—like a fool—I took for a small donkey, though I might have known that such an animal was probably not to be found nearer than the Zoological Gardens at Moscow—where one was kept as a rarity and greatly valued as such.

"Then, like a flash, the truth was borne in upon me—*it was a wolf*, and a huge one! Fool—idiot that I had been to miss such a chance! for even number fours—and at a distance of twenty yards

SENT A CARTRIDGE-FULL OF NUMBER FOURS AFTER HIM.

—might have so wounded the brute that I should have chased and perhaps overtaken him.

"I rushed forward in the forlorn hope of catching sight of him once more, little as I deserved it.

"Well, I did catch sight of him. Skulking off quickly with a grinning face—as it seemed—turned back at me over his shoulder, he was cantering under the trees thirty yards away, and I sent a cartridge-full of number fours after him.

"Of course, he instantly disappeared, but there was a spot of blood upon the track of the brute, who—to judge from the somewhat scrambling footmarks he had left in his first frightened rush into cover—had retreated upon three legs instead of four.

"Away I scudded at full speed. I had my second barrel, and—said I to myself—I would keep my head and my cartridge; even though I should come as close upon the brute as ten or twelve yards from his tail I would not fire; I should wait until I could actually overtake him, and then spurt alongside and fire point-blank into his ear.

"Even as I mused, I saw him again, forty yards ahead, going for all he was worth at a three-legged gallop, holding his fourth foot in the air, and from time to time losing ground by suddenly stopping for an instant to turn and bite at the wounded member, which he would do with a yelp of pain or rage.

"Away he went, and away went I after him, and soon—though I hesitated to assure myself of the fact, lest it should prove a mistake and disappoint me—soon I could not help being pretty certain that I was gaining.

"It was not very long before the forest began to thin, and it became evident that I had travelled fairly across the belt of forest, which I had entered at the Moscow side, and was about to emerge at the other end.

"By this time I was within fifteen or twenty yards of the wolf, who hobbled along well, considering that he was a leg short.

"Another minute or two and we had passed out of the forest and were careering over a wide plain, and here—just as I expected, I began to gain pretty rapidly, a yard at a time, till I was first twelve paces, then but ten, and at last but a bare half-dozen from his tail. The left hind leg was broken, I could see, near the foot.

"I now began to feel certain of my wolf, and only waited for the moment when I should make my effort, spurt rapidly for a minute or two, rush past him on the right, and empty my gun into his head at discretion. I must be careful and do the thing thoroughly, once for all, since I had been so idiotic as to bring not a single spare cartridge.

"Quickly we flew across the wide plain that opened, level and white, from the edge of the forest, and now we had reached a bushy patch of ground that seemed to crown a gully leading, I suppose, in summer to the banks of a streamlet or small river.

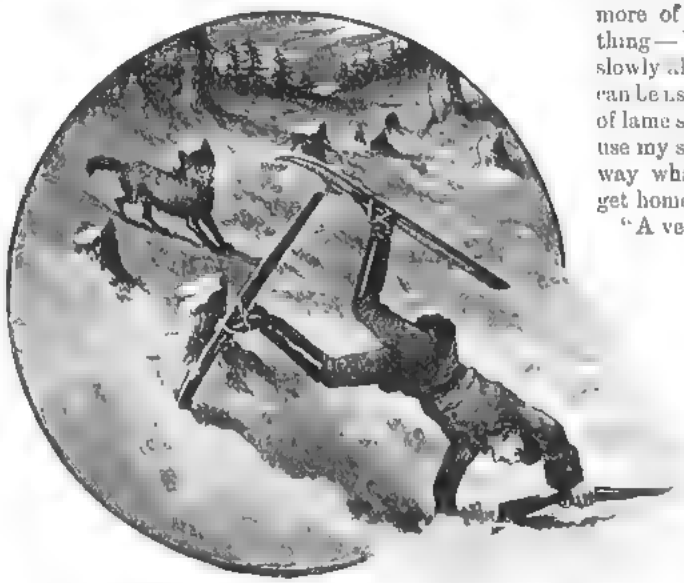
"I was almost at the very tail of my limping quarry, who panted now as he ran, occasionally turning a wicked face at me over his shoulder and snarling back at me a message of deadly hatred and menace, which made me doubly determined to be very sure of my shot before I attempted to perform the happy despatch upon him; for if I should only wound and enrage the brute, and he turned and fell upon me with those fangs that he seemed so anxious to show me in all their glistening glory, why, the chase might end in a manner which would prove less agreeable to me than I had taken the liberty to expect.

"Just as I was in the very act of sprinting

forward in order to bring myself level with the side of his head, which I should then blow into fragments at half-a-yard range, we reached the top of the gully just mentioned, and my snow-shoes began to slip and skid and show that inclination to cross one another and floor their master which is so familiar to all those who have practised the pretty art of ski-running, and especially of shooting the hill-sides, upon the narrow, slippery snow-shoes or ski used in Norway and Russia.

"I should have been all right, for I flatter myself that I can negotiate a steep hill on the shoes as successfully as most, but unfortunately the slope was covered with the stumps of felled or burned trees, some of which were visible above the surface of the snow, and some inviaible, just beneath snow-level.

"I dodged two or three of these, and the impetus of my rapid descent was just carrying me like a lightning's flash past the wolf, when suddenly the points of my ski struck a tree-stump concealed just beneath the surface, and in a moment I was flying head first through space, to plunge an instant later, face first, into a deep snow bath that awaits the over-thrown ski-runner, and into which he penetrates to any depth that the impetus of his flight avails to carry him.



TO PLUNGE AN INSTANT LATER, FACE FIRST, INTO A DEEP SNOW BATH.

"I was furious with rage and disgust. I knew I should now lose all the ground I had gained, and a great deal more besides, before I could be up and after my wolf, even though by good luck, and I suppose the instinct of the moment, I had clung to my gun, and still held it fast in my snow grave.

"But alas! No sooner had I begun to move in order to regain the surface and get once more upon my feet, than I became aware, by a violent twinge of pain at the ankle, that I was damaged. It was agony to move my left leg, and in despair and the deepest mortification, I instantly realised that the hunt was up; I had lost my wolf.

"This was bad enough, and at the first moment I certainly did not think that anything could possibly be worse; but when I began to pick myself up and attempt to get into my snow-shoes once again, I learned that worse things are possible than the mere losing of a wolf.

"For I now discovered that I was dead lame. My ankle was badly sprained; the pain was great, but that was nothing. The significant thing was that I could now no more attempt to skate homeward upon my snow-shoes, than leave them behind and fly homewards with only my coat-tails for pinions.

"I sat down and began to think how I should best proceed in order to get back to town. It was obviously impossible to travel at any pace; the chase was up—I thought no more of that as a possible thing—but could I limp slowly along (if such a word can be used of ski-going, even of lame ski-going!) or indeed use my sprained foot in any way whatever in order to get homewards?

"A very little while spent in the attempt served to convince me that I could not.

"Slowly the conviction forced itself upon me that I was destined to spend the night out of doors.

"Now this was not only an extremely disagreeable prospect, seeing that I was without food or warm clothing, but distinctly a dangerous one as well; for, what if it should come on to snow—as well it might at this season—and the new fall were to obliterate the tracks of my snow-shoes? Why, then I should not be found, maybe, until I was frozen stiff and hard, a candidate for sepulchral honours, which, of course, are all right so far as they go, though I, for one, prefer to remain as long as possible on the sunny side of the soil, and have never yet felt any ambition to be buried, even smartly.

"On the other hand, if the weather continued fine and clear, my tracks would remain, and I should undoubtedly be sought for and easily found by my friends, but not until the next morning; for the short day was already almost ended, and

dusk had begun to blunt the sharp lines and edges of the forest that lay behind and in front of me, surrounding the two-mile plot of open land in which I lay. I was, I suppose, quite ten miles from home. In a word, the prospect was unpleasant.

"I would, I think, have painfully hobbled back as far as the nearest pine cover, but that it occurred to me, on reflection, that I would rather be benighted in the open than in the midst of the forest, where prowling beasts might creep up unseen, in the shadow of the pine trees, and watch and perhaps attack me unsuspected.

"My wounded wolf, for instance, might well bethink him that I had caused him severe pain, and perhaps the anguish of fear also—for I had all but caught him when an evil destiny upset me and my calculations and gave him the game. Perhaps he would return upon his tracks—catch me asleep beneath a tree—work himself into a passion of hunger, which, for a wolf, is the one and only road to courage, and presently—primed to the necessary point — would suddenly spring upon my throat, and—*crunch!*—exit sleeper, after a disagreeable awakening!

"No—I would remain here in the open, where, at least, I could watch and see anything that moved within sight. There would be half a moon to-night. I should distinguish objects pretty plainly.

"So I tied up my ankle, which was swollen and painful, and covered myself with snow for warmth, until little but my head remained above surface, and waited.

"My gun, with its one No. 4 cartridge, lay beside me—my only friend and guardian; a kind of one-armed sentry, that could strike but one blow in my defence, and must then, like its lame master, be overpowered.

"It was cold, but my body was warm enough, buried in the snow. I thought of everything that was most distracting; I thought of my business, of my best girl—and perhaps of my second best—of my holiday in England now looming in the near and blessed future—and after a while I fell asleep.

"I slept, I suppose, for four hours at least, and it may have been more. One of my ears was frozen slightly, but otherwise the cold had not hurt me. I looked sleepily around to make sure that all was safe. The moon was up and I could see fairly well to a considerable distance.

"The forest line was indistinct, though, of course, the tops of the trees were clearly outlined against the sky. In front of the forest, half-way between them and me, on my left, was a row of tree stumps that I did not remember—six, seven, nine of them. It was curious that I had not noticed these, for they stood so symmetrically, like a line of little black men on sentry-go.

"I rubbed my ear with snow, releasing my arms to do so, and soon made it comfortable. Then I glanced again, but quite without design, in the direction of the row of stumps. *They were not there!*

"I winked my eyes and looked again. Certainly they had disappeared. Was my sight going wrong—spots in the eye, or something of the kind—the result of the frost? I rubbed the skin violently all around them and looked again. The stumps were not there; but my eyes felt all right. I must have been mistaken.

"So I sat still awhile, and gave myself up to the luxury of thought. I was going to England; I had done well in my business, and I might marry if I chose, and if someone else chose. The thing was, *did* I choose? I liked girls, and this girl perhaps best of them, but——

"Suddenly my meditations were broken by a sound which positively made my blood run cold. It always does, whenever I hear it, and under any circumstances—the howl of a wolf; the dreariest, saddest, weirdest, uncanniest cry that ever was selected by one of God's creatures to convey information to a brother of his ilk, or, it may be, to relieve his own feelings. It was doubly weird, trebly terrifying now—when the sound betokened extremely serious things for me! and since it was, moreover, much nearer than I had ever heard it before.

"At the same moment, slowly turning my head in the direction whence the howling proceeded, I observed that the nine stumps which I had seen on my left now stood in a row on my right.

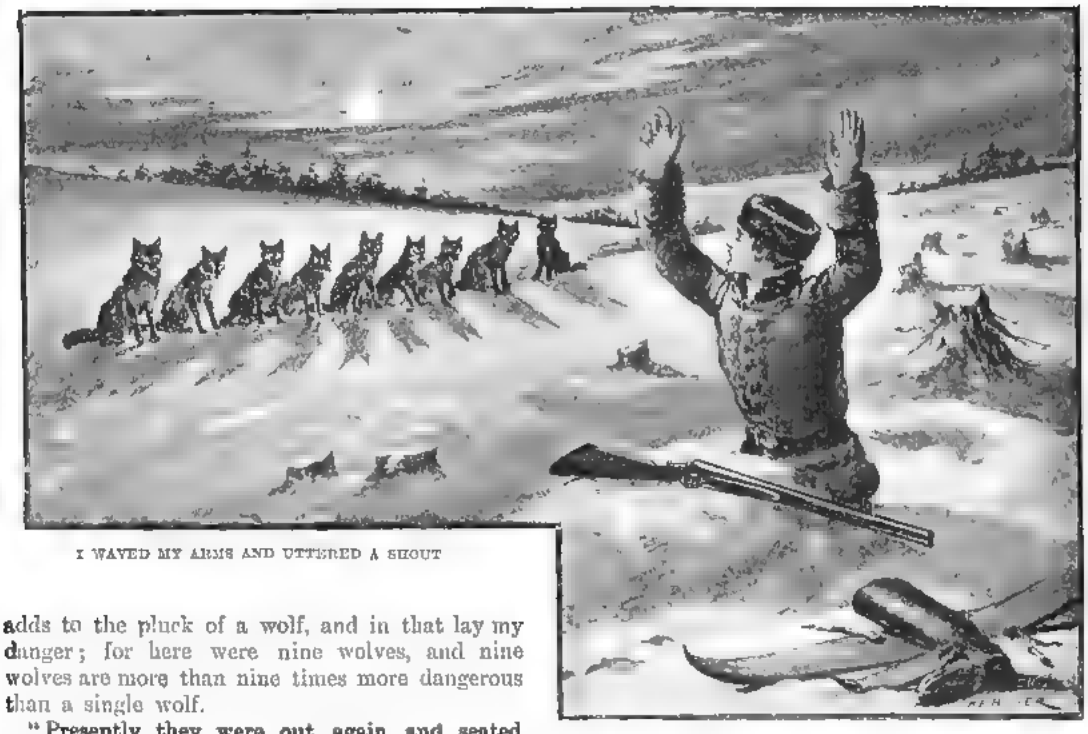
"Then I recognised those tree-stumps, and recognised also my position, which was most unenviable, I can assure you. The stumps were, of course, wolves—nine of them, seated upon their haunches and watching me; licking their lips, no doubt, and trying to pluck up courage to run in and win.

"I waved my arms and uttered a shout.

"Like a dream the creatures vanished, scudding for the cover of the pines as though the Evil One were after them.

"'Come,' I thought, 'you are far from worked up as yet, my friends! There may still be a chance for me if I keep my head!'

"As a matter of fact, a wolf is a great coward until he is so hungry that famine and desperation compel him to disregard danger for his stomach's sake. The winter had not been a very cold one, however, and these wolves were probably by no means starving; if there had been but one or two they would not have dared even this much; their numbers had emboldened them. Every companion



I WAVED MY ARMS AND UTTERED A SHOUT

adds to the pluck of a wolf, and in that lay my danger; for here were nine wolves, and nine wolves are more than nine times more dangerous than a single wolf.

"Presently they were out again, and seated upon their haunches watching me. I shouted a second time, and once more they fled, but not so far as the forest line, turning and squatting this time after running a few yards. This was a bad sign, for it meant that they were beginning to gather courage. I remained still, anxious to see to what extent their courage would avail them and whether I was to regard the brutes as really dangerous or not.

"Of a sudden one of them set up a howl, and another chimed in. It was just as though he had cried 'Come, boys, there's only one, and probably he's almost frozen to death. Let's make a dash and have him!'—for immediately the whole company started and trotted towards me, suddenly stopping and squatting when within about thirty or forty yards.

"I do not pretend that I was not frightened. On the contrary, I gave myself up for lost as they came nearer and nearer. I prayed, and then shouted. It was in response to my shout that they stopped and sat down. But the effect went no further than this; evidently my shouts no longer greatly terrified them since they found that these were followed by no physical injury to themselves.

"At a distance of forty yards they sat and watched for an hour. During this time my courage rather increased than diminished. I stood up and waved my arms, doing imaginary dumb-bell exercises. This kept me warm, and prevented, it seemed, a further advance of the enemy

"Then I grew tired and rested, and almost immediately the brutes advanced another ten or fifteen yards, and again squatted upon their haunches and watched me. The situation was becoming somewhat desperate.

"Then I took to singing songs. I sang a dozen on end, bawling them at the top of my voice till I was hoarse and was compelled to stop. Instantly my nine friends advanced—this time trotting forward until they sat within ten yards of me. It was more than horrible, almost maddening. Indeed, I think I grew somewhat light-headed at this point of my trials. I remember addressing the nine grim, squatting brutes in a speech, abusing them in calm but coldly cutting terms—a speech, biting, sarcastic, venomous, but not, I think, rude. I remonstrated with them, and also threatened them; I had my gun, I told them, and intended to blow out the brains of the first wolf that ventured to come within a four-foot circle.

"The wolves seemed to listen with interest. They fidgeted their feet when I had finished speaking, and one or two whined softly. One howled aloud — it was terrible; moreover, it seemed as though the sound encouraged the rest, for they moved a very little closer.

"I went through wild gymnastical exercises

some of which alarmed them sufficiently to drive them for a moment or two a few yards further from me; but they soon returned and again sat about me, as close as the nearest point up to which they had yet ventured.

"So long as I moved or spoke they came no nearer, and so the matter halted for a period which seemed an eternity, but which was, I suppose, two or three hours, at most. Then I became so hoarse that I could speak no more, and was, moreover, so weary that every movement, besides being most painful to my injured limb, which the gymnastics had not relieved, was an effort for which I scarcely now possessed sufficient strength. I felt that I must sit down and rest. If they came nearer in consequence, one should die at any rate, and perhaps the shot would scare the rest. I sat down and waited and rested, gun in hand.

I BROUGHT MY GUN TO BEAR UPON HIM, AND FIRED.

"Almost immediately the wolves began to grow impatient, believing, I suppose, that the time had nearly arrived when an attack upon me might be made with impunity. One or two began to trot round and round me—a move which disconcerted me very much, for I could not protect myself both in front and behind at the same time. The whining turned to snarling—matters were coming to a crisis.

"Suddenly—and almost unexpectedly, for I had not thought that I should be attacked quite yet—one of the brutes rushed in, open mouthed and long toothed, uttering no sound but a kind of indrawn snarl; he had actually fixed his teeth in my leg—partially protected by the felt-lined, leather knee-boot that I wore—before I was aware of his intentions. I felt the drag of his jaws as he pulled at my flesh, his teeth firmly fixed in my calf, his desire being, I suppose, to haul me away among his comrades, to be torn to pieces at discretion.

"He had, I think, dragged me a little way before I brought my gun to bear upon him, and fired.

"His jaws relaxed their hold, and his eyes dimmed; he fell backwards from me, recovered himself and snarled viciously, looking like an angry devil, and striving to gather himself together as though to spring upon me; but in a moment he fell back again, dying.

"I looked about, having struggled to my feet, for the rest, clubbing my gun for a last fight. They were gone.

"Not for long, however. Inch by inch I saw them creep back until, within a quarter of an hour, they squatted and walked and trotted as before, licking their lips and snarling, within five yards of me, but keeping their distance.

"Suddenly one made a dart. I thought he meant to pull me down, and was ready for him with clubbed gun; but he seized his still struggling comrade by the foot and dragged him away.

"Immediately the other seven fell upon him and his prize, and a snarling, growling, rending, tearing match began which lasted for an hour or more—until the eight had picked the one to pieces and swallowed every particle of him save his bones; a devilish, cannibal orgie, indeed, but undoubtedly my salvation.

"For whether their weird meal had satisfied them, or whether the oncoming dawn reminded them that their deeds were deeds of darkness and

would not bear the light of day; or whether—their hunger satisfied—it suddenly struck them that I was a dangerous thing and might at any moment spit fire at them, even as I had launched it at the late lamented object of their supper—whatever the cause, they drew off by ones and twos, and the howling of the last of the crew died away in the distance of the forest.

"This was a good opportunity to faint, and I availed myself of it so thoroughly, that when my friends arrived upon my track at about eight or nine in the morning, I was still as insensible as the picked bones of my victim, which lay, as witness to my adventure, fifteen yards away, in the spot to which he had been dragged for the feast.

"And if any of you don't believe the tale," the narrator ended, "see here for yourselves!" And with the words our friend removed the long felt *válinka* or over-stocking, pulled up his trousers to the knee, and showed us two immense blue scars upon his leg, which—as someone remarked—whether the wolf made them or not, at any rate fitted very neatly into the story, and formed a kind of realistic illustration which was most effective.

As a matter of fact I believe there is no doubt that the story is true.

Ready about November 30th.

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NEW ISSUE COLLECTING.

THE dawn of the twentieth century! At the dawn of the nineteenth, postage stamps, much less collectors, were undreamt of. To-day the available varieties of the former are numbered by their tens of thousands, while of the latter no correct estimate of strength can be given, for their number is legion.

A remarkable feature of the most recent history of stamp collecting has been the ever increasing number of new issues emanating from all sources. Kingdoms rise and fall, kings and governors come and go, but new postage stamps go on for ever; and at their present rate of manufacture they form in themselves a branch of stamp collecting almost separated from early issues. For two reasons. One, the earlier issues, mainly on account of the rapid growth of "specialism," are becoming more and more difficult for the young collector to obtain; and second, their value has been so often raised that, while they afford unstinted interest to the promiscuous collector, they are not the same sources of profit to the collector they once were.

Hence, while nothing has to be said against the collection of old issues, more has to be urged in favour of a collection of new issues.

Last month I elected to give our stamp-collecting readers some notes on Transvaal stamps of more recent issue. This is only one country which lends opportunity for profitable attention; there are others which at the present time are emitting issues which, on account of possible ephemeral existence, are well worthy of special attention.

AFRICA.—I have always found, and find still, a special attraction in the various stamps of this continent. The issues of the East, Central, and South portions alone are of comparatively recent date, and at the same time are of a highly interesting and instructive character. There is still, in the writer's opinion, a great future before them. The railway from Cape to Cairo is not without its meaning, although just what it implies we may have to wait before knowing certainly.

Then there is China, a country which, in the writer's school-days anyway, boasted of but six unpretending labels. In the short space of five years this vast empire of over three hundred million souls has become so disintegrated that almost all the powers of Europe are represented by separate postage stamps for the portions which have fallen into their hands. Its future is uncertain, but the numerous labels now claiming relations with the Chinese Empire are well worth accumulating. These include British, French, German, and Russian China, in addition to a long and interesting list of issues for use in China proper, which have appeared within the last five years.

Another field for profitable new issue collecting is opened up by the late war between the United States and Spain. Since the results of this war were known, the stamps—multitudinous in variety—of Cuba, Porto Rico, and the Philippine Islands have become obsolete, and in their place numerous issues have come and gone, having their origin in

the United States. CUBA was provided with certain values of the current U.S.A. stamps overprinted, as described in past articles which have appeared in THE CAPTAIN. These stamps have long been obsolete, and a new set, described last month, is in use. PORTO RICO likewise had a provisional set, which collectors were advised to procure. At the moment of writing I am informed that, as soon as the present stock is exhausted, *unsurcharged* stamps of the U.S.A. will be used in Porto Rico.

One might easily dilate upon other profitable quarters in which to hunt for desirable stamps at a trivial cost. The main feature of these notes is to encourage the young collector to persevere with his new issues, getting as many as possible as they appear, remembering that in the long run, for various reasons, his money will have been well expended.

Remember also that, to a great extent, the tendency of the times is to *centralisation*. Thus, instead of, as in years past, there being numerous *single* countries to collect under their individual headings, it is now *groups* of countries which comprise a mother country and her *colonies*—*cf.* Great Britain half a century back with Great Britain *and her colonies* of to-day; United States of America *and colonies* (Cuba, Porto Rico, Hawaii, etc.) to-day. Similarly Germany *and colonies*, France and the numerous *French colonies*, and so on; all pointing to a feature of modern history that is written large on the numerous stamps which have been issued with the advance of colonial expansion. Collections of stamps formed along these lines will to-day prove to every collector to be of the highest utility and interest, while fifty years hence, when half of the twentieth century has rolled by, future generations will be shown stamps which, in many ways, have been inseparably connected with "the making of an Empire."

At a future date I will enlarge my suggestion, and tell how to commence collections of new issues based on the points urged. In the meantime be getting together all possible varieties of the countries named.

OUR NATIONAL COLLECTION.

Although most of our readers are aware that there reposes in the British Museum a "National Collection" of postage stamps, presented to the nation by the late Mr. T. K. Tapling, M.P., there may be many who are unaware that the value of this collection approximates £100,000. The work of arrangement of the collection, entrusted to Mr. E. D. Bacon, a prominent philatelist, has occupied that gentleman about six and a-half years, sorting and mounting for exhibition the vast number of specimens it contains.

The collection—the mounting of which is nearly completed—is contained in a large number of blank albums, with movable leaves, upon which the stamps are affixed, having been previously mounted upon a small square of white cardboard, with a red line ruled round. At present portions only of the collection can be exhibited, these being changed from time to time. For various reasons the whole collection cannot be presented to the public gaze; but it is understood that the authorities have under consideration methods for exhibiting larger portions than is at present possible.

The collection is a general one, including postage and telegraph stamps, as well as stamped stationery. Every country is represented by the greatest rarities; one of the chief features of the collection being the presence of a very large number of reconstructed plates of stamps—*i.e.*, stamps of similar designs, and all contained on one sheet, but each specimen differing in type.

It will well repay stamp collectors visiting London to drop in and inspect the portion of the collection on view during any time they may be near the British Museum.

At the moment of writing, the daily papers announce that M. Victor Robert has presented his collection to the French Museum. The value of the treasures is said to approximate £80,000.

MANCHESTER PHILATELIC EXHIBITION.

Lack of space forbids my making anything but a passing reference to the great exhibition which has lately been held in Manchester. Those who would value full details of the exhibits and awards would do well to communicate with the secretary, Mr. G. F. H. Gibson, 2, Cooper Street, Manchester, from whom copies of the catalogue (price 1s.) can be obtained. The exhibition was opened on June 29th by Mr. Henniker Heaton, M.P., the originator of Imperial Penny Postage. Among the many medal awards I notice the *grand prix* was carried off by a collector of British stamps, Mr. H. J. White, the collection being complete in strips, blocks, pairs or single stamps of all issues. This collection is the finest in the world of any one separate country, and took the gold medal at the London Exhibition of 1897. Numerous gold and silver medals were obtained by exhibitors of general collections numbering from ten thousand varieties downwards. The special bronze medal for the best collection of not less than two thousand varieties, shown by a boy or girl under sixteen and attending school, was

won by Mr J. S. Higgins, junr., who showed a collection of Great Britain in three volumes, unused and used. The same exhibitor took the silver medal offered in Class IV. for the best exhibit shown by a collector under twenty-one.

Another young philatelist, Mr. J. S. Higginson, of Dublin, won the silver medal offered for the best exhibit from Ireland.

The results of the Manchester Exhibition should stir up the younger collectors to take pains with their albums, which may stand a good chance of winning a medal at some future date.

SOME INTERESTING NOTES ON STAMP TOPICS.

A "Beginners' Stamp Exchange Society" has been formed, which young collectors with duplicates might do worse than join. The initiator of the society is Miss F. E. Smith, of "Winfrith," The Crescent, Bedford.

We have received No. 1 of the *Stamp Collector's Guardian*, a new monthly paper (1s. 6d. per annum), to which young collectors would do well to subscribe. If succeeding issues come up to the standard of No. 1 the *S.C.G.* should prove a welcome guardian of the philatelic peace! Specimen copies from 3, Cursitor Street, Chancery Lane, E.C.

Some high prices realised at a recent London stamp auction:—Cape of Good Hope, triangular 1d. *blue*, error, damaged, £33; 4d. *red*, error, ditto, £20; Mauritius, post-paid. 1d. orange, a pair, £31 10s.; 2d. blue, a single copy, £14 15s.; British Columbia, 6c., imperfect, £16 16s.

Stamps (F. L. Heygate, editor, Lyndhurst, Rushden, Northants), a bright monthly paper for young collectors, urges a collection of Swedish stamps in its September issue. There are only seven distinct issues of Sweden, and all the stamps, with one exception, are available to the average collector.

A change in at least two of our current stamps is proposed, the ½d. vermilion to be changed to green, and the 1s. green is to be printed in two colours. Welcome change!

The Midland Stamp Co., of Castle Bromwich, Birmingham, have sent us price lists of stamp albums, packets, sets, and accessories. They are well suited to collectors of all ages, and contain quotations of many cheap stamps.

The collection of *post-cards* is becoming increasingly popular. A single collection is said to have been sold recently in Toronto for £8,000! Post-cards (unused) can be purchased cheaply, and when prettily arranged form a pleasing adjunct to the general album.

NOTICE.

We have decided to cease the supply of our monthly packet of new issues. Our philatelic pages are conducted by a COLLECTOR, *independently for young collectors, and we have no desire to tread in any way on ground occupied by the* DEALING *fraternity. We trust this decision will be received in good part by our readers, especially those who have been regular purchasers of* THE CAPTAIN *packets of new issues.*—ED.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

L. C. F. Oldfield. Many thanks for your interesting letter. You will find the Canadian surcharges are already described. Write for your requirements to any of the dealers advertising in THE CAPTAIN.

R. R. R.—You will see by the notice that we have discontinued THE CAPTAIN monthly packet of new issues. (1) See those advertising in our pages. (2) We can't speak of America. The leading firm is the Scott Stamp & Coin Co., 18, East Twenty-third Street, New York City. (3) Any forgery can be detected, however good, but many are such faithful imitations that the services of an expert are necessary.

W. J. McDonald. Your stamp with "China" printed across it should be placed under French China; or, if no space so defined, put it under China. The latter country is becoming so broken up that a collection of "China and the Powers" will soon be quite a study in itself. You omitted stamped envelope for reply.

J. R. Jones.—The B Guiana stamp is apparently a forgery. It would need to be tested by the Expert Committee of the London Philatelic Society. If genuine it is very interesting. The Spanish stamp obliterated with two black bars is one of the *remainders* sold in bulk to dealers. Local stamps of U.S.A. are scarce, if originals. Reprints exist, and are very common.

H. Hughes.—The Transvaal Commemoration stamps are at present catalogued at 2d. used. I advise you to keep all you have, as they may increase in value. No stamp enclosed for reply.

J. Hembrow.—I know the set of stamps you allude to, well. There is a certain value, but nothing great. Certainly not of sufficient value to warrant parting with them.

B. H.—Have marked your stamps.

C. J. Watt.—Have marked and returned your stamps. Thanks for letter; we blushed while perusing it.

C. C. C.—(1) 1s. (2) 7s. 6d., or according to its condition.

CHESS COMPETITION FOR DECEMBER.

THE following problem, by Mr. J. J. Glynn, a well-known head master in New South Wales, gained a prize of three guineas. Mr. Glynn has kindly sent it to me for readers of THE CAPTAIN to solve. Let me give competitors one hint—a good problem will not have a check for its key move. Set up the position very carefully, and try to solve it. All the variations must be given.

WHITE (ten pieces).—K on QR8, Q on KB8, B's on QBsq and KKt8, Kt's on QKt4 and KKt7, R's on QR5 and Q4, P's on KB2 and KR4.

BLACK (seven pieces).—K on K4, Q on K5, Kt's on Q7 and KB3, P's on Q4, QB7 and KB6.

White has to play and mate in two.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Percy Smith (HULL).—You are mistaken; the game can be finished in two moves. (1) Q×Bch, (1) Kt×Q, (2) B—h16 mate; or (1) P—Kt3, (2) Q or B×P mate.

R. G. D. A. and others.—It must have been a slip. There can certainly be two queens on the board at the same time.

THE CHESS EDITOR.

SPECIAL PAGE.

Contributed by Readers.

As I thought, there are some nimble penmen amongst my readers, and below I print, in all their pristine simplicity (that is to say, uncorrected by me), the efforts of sundry Members of the Crew. The first contribution wins the award I promised, *i.e.*, One Year's subscription to THE CAPTAIN. The Prize "Specialist" this month is: K. FINLAY, 2, Queen's Terrace, Aberdeen.

Percy Harold Lewis deserves special mention for his "Mixed Poem." An essay on "The Fairs at Boulogne-sur-Mer," by John Cox, is held over on account of its length.

"The Captain" Alphabet.

A is the Article written by Fry,
B Best Boys' Paper that money can buy.
C is the "Comp.," which brings skill into play,
D is the Drawing by Browne, or Phil May.
E's the Excitement when CAPTAIN is due;
F are its Features—both pleasing and new.
G stands for "Greyhouse" by R. Warren Bell.
H is for Henty, and Lord Hawke as well.
I's the "Iron Pirate"—a clever man he,
J are the Jokes he related at tea.
K's Keble H——, who caught Ranji in bed!
L all the Letters the Old Fag has read.
M are the Magazines, briefly reviewed;
N is the Next man to be interviewed.
O is the Old Fag—aged eighty or more,
P are the Pleasantries he's noted for,
Q's "Quality"—that's his motto, no doubt.
R is the Rush when THE CAPTAIN comes out!
S the School Captains, all fine-looking chaps;
T's Captain Tobutt, or "Two Fags," perhaps.
U's "Up the Steeple," a tale of sad plight;
V the new Volume we hail with delight!
W's for Wardour—of no one afraid,
X the 'Xample of Eccles he made.
Y is the Youth who hard work doth despise;
Z equals Zero—*his* chance of a prize.

K. FINLAY.

A Mixed Poem.

(Composed of lines taken from well-known ballads.)

A chieftain to the Highlands bound,
His father's hope, his mother's joy,
Found something smooth, and hard, and round,
John Brown's little Indian boy.

Man wants but little here below,
Oats, peas, beans, and barley;
This world is all a fleeting show,
Over the water to Charley.

John Gilpin was a citizen,
From India's coral strand;
Far from the busy haunts of men,
There is a happy land.

PERCY HAROLD LEWIS.

"I'm a Fife!"

The following story of a lady who was very proud of her name of Fife, was told me in the north. This lady was very fond of taking other people's seats in church. One day the old verger saw her enter the squire's pew, and the following conversation began:—

Verger: "Come oot."

Lady: "I shall not come out."

Verger: "Come oot."

Lady: "Do you know who you are speaking to? *I'm* a Fife!"

Verger: "I don't care if ye're a fife or a trombone; ye've got to come oot!"

JOHN DAVISON.

The following is the work of a little boy—the handwriting is, at any rate—but it possesses a certain poetic flavour which takes my fancy.

A-Dreaming in the Forest.

'Twas in the forest beautiful,
Where I a-dreaming fell,
And in my dream I saw
A maiden sweet as dew.
Across the dell she roamed alone
Amid the endless bracken,
And on her head were roses,
And on her arms were lilies;
And as she onward roam'd,
And as I onward slept,
I dreamt I saw some fairies
That were hiding in the forest,
But as I watched them there,
They vanish'd quite away;
And then me saw a vision
That told of sweet Jerusalem
And the wonders wrought therein;
But as I contemplated
Amid the sylvan beauty,
The morn began to dawn,
And in the morn I woke;
And around me grew the mosses,
Trees, and ferns, and grasses.

SONGSTER (Sussex).

OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS.

T Harris.—I do not think much of your anecdote.

Winifred Lynch.—Your "History of a Pen" is too long, but it displays a faculty for story-telling.

A. G. Simmons.—Not great, but neatly written.

P. Bartlett.—Hardly good enough to reproduce.

Norman J Chignell.—Nonsense rhymes have been done to death. The pictorial puzzle is fair.

G. Braddell.—You are a bright, observant girl.

N. Douglas.—Essay well written, but far too long.

Ruth Chignell.—Your "errors" came from Oxford years ago. A don of that university is said to have perpetrated some of them. I want "original" contributions for this page.

James A. Ramsey.—Joke good. Drawing "orrible."

Harold Barnshaw.—The little stories you send are as old as the hills. *No copied matter* is eligible for this page.

A. E. Lockyer.—You and the yacht seem to have had a bad time. No room for the account here.

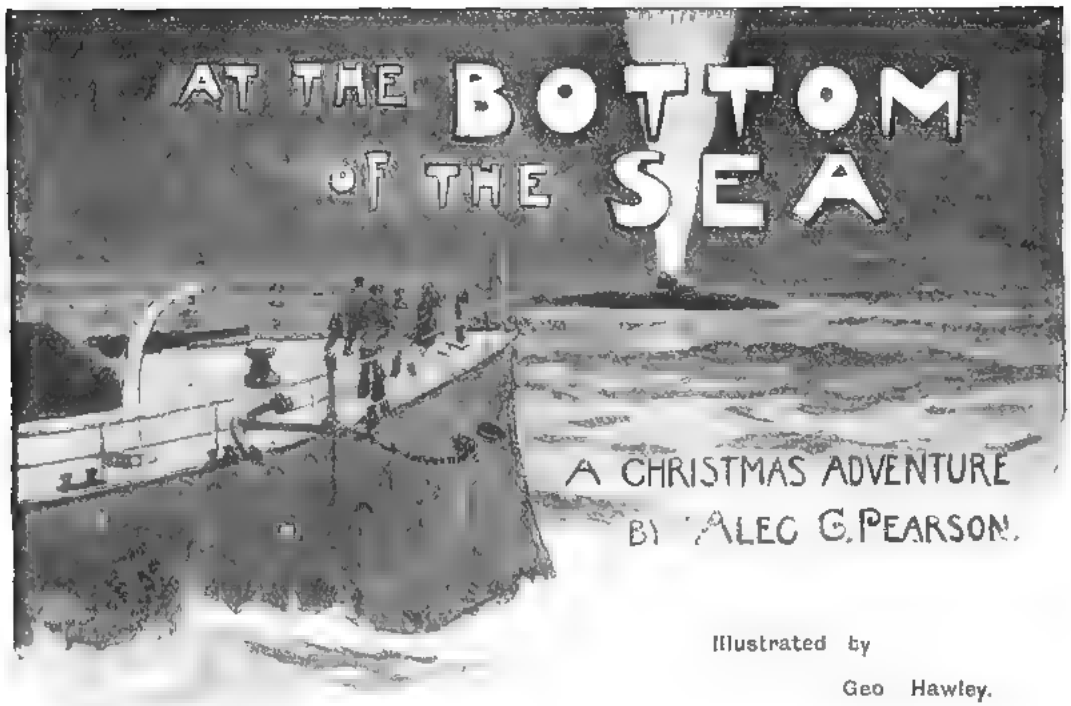
Harry Chamberlain.—Have reproduced the sketch of "school hats" in Editorial.

John Adams.—Not a very nice story, John Adams.

William Young.—The puzzle is a very ancient one.

J. W. Hicks.—Drawing is *bad*. Handwriting excellent.

JACK TAR'S CHRISTMAS CARGO.



TOM SELWYN, one of the midshipmen of the watch on board Her Majesty's second-class cruiser, *Brilliant*, leaned over the forecastle rail and peered into the gloom ahead, as though he expected to see a ghost. The thought of phantom ships or spectral seamen was very far from his mind just then, however, although it was the season of the year supposed to be most favoured by apparitions, for it was Christmas Eve, and nearing midnight.

As an actual fact, Tom Selwyn, in common with the lieutenant of the watch and two look-out men, was keeping his "weather eye lifting" for a sight of that which is far more to be feared than a ghost on a dark and misty night at sea—to wit, solid land. For somewhere in the impervious darkness to leeward the island of Dinosa lay hidden, and it had no friendly lighthouse upon it to warn mariners of its close proximity.

"Blest if one might not almost fancy one's self in the English Channel," growled the bluejacket who was on the look-out. "Fog and mist ain't what I call Mediterranean weather."

"It's what you might call Christmassy weather, though," observed a bo's'un's mate, who was leaning with his back against the capstan.

This reference to Christmas had the effect of directing Tom Selwyn's thoughts into a particularly pleasant channel. The *Brilliant* was steering for Malta, where they expected to arrive early on the following morning. So long as three weeks ago, when they had left Valetta harbour for a cruise on the Tunisian coast, Tom had had an invitation to spend Christmas Day with some friends of his, the Flemings. He called to mind the pleasant time he had had when visiting them before, for Fleming *père* was a genial and kindly host, and his dinners were proverbial. Then there was his pretty daughter, Lucy——

"There's a queer-looking light right ahead of us, sir. Seems to be shining up out of the water."

It was the deep sea-growl of the A.B. on the look-out that broke in upon Tom's pleasant reverie.

"A queer light ahead!"

Tom gazed long and steadily in the direction indicated. Sure enough, there was a ray of light streaming straight up into the air from the surface of the water. It was of about the brilliance of the steady glow thrown from a policeman's bull's-eye, but of a greater circumference.

"Light coming out of the water straight ahead, sir," reported Tom to the lieutenant of the watch on the bridge.

"All right," replied that officer. He had observed it at that moment, and was staring

hard at the unusual phenomenon through his binoculars.

"Very strange," he muttered. "I have never heard of a fish that emitted luminous rays. Port your helm, quartermaster."

The *Brilliant* was under easy steam, gliding through the smooth water at about eight knots an hour, but in less than five minutes she was quite close to the strange illumination. It was now perceptible that it proceeded from a dome-shaped object that was floating in the water, its apex being about eighteen inches above the surface.

"Good Lord! What queer sort of sea monster have we come across now?" exclaimed the boatswain's mate.

"It's a submarine boat!" cried Tom Selwyn.

It was the first one of these strange craft that he had ever seen, but he recognised it by descriptions he had read of the *Gymnote*, the *Gustave Zédé*, and the *Holland*.

The captain had now joined the lieutenant on the bridge, and he at once gave orders for the engines to be stopped and the first cutter called away. As the *Brilliant* came to a standstill the boat was lowered and water-borne, and the crew took their places.

"Send a midshipman in the cutter to examine and report upon yonder craft," ordered the captain.

There were only two midshipmen in the second lieutenant's watch—Tom Selwyn, who was an "oldster," and a chubby youngster of the name of Dolland, familiarly known as "Dolly." But as Dolly was wanting in experience, Tom was called by the lieutenant, and told to go in the cutter.

"You had better hammer at the man-hole hatch," said the lieutenant, "until you make the people on board the craft hear. You can tell the skipper, or whoever shows himself, that they stand a very good chance of being run down, as it is difficult to see their vessel on such a night as this. They had better either take her into shallow water or sink clear of passing vessels."

Tom touched his cap, took a seat in the stern of the cutter, and gave the order to shove off. A smart pull of three or four minutes brought them alongside the submarine boat.

To hail her in the ordinary way was, of course, quite out of the question, as the sound of a voice would never penetrate to the interior; so Tom banged away at the metal dome with an iron belaying-pin, which he had brought with him for that purpose.

"That'll wake 'em up, I'll bet," observed the coxswain, who was watching Tom's performance admiringly.

It did, for presently the man-hole trap was raised, and a man's head and shoulders appeared. He was a dark-visaged, foreign-looking fellow, whose black hair was slightly touched with grey.

He uttered a few words angrily in French, and then, recognising the British uniform, continued his remarks in fairly good English.

"What is it that you require?" he demanded. "And the noise—why is there so much of it?"

"He don't like being roused out of his beauty sleep," muttered a bluejacket.

"I must say Mr. Selwyn played a splendid tattoo with that belaying-pin," observed another.

Selwyn, in the meantime, was replying to the indignant foreigner, and pointing out the danger which his vessel ran of being sent to the bottom with no chance of ever rising to the surface again.

His manner changed at once, and from a state of indignation he passed to one of grave courtesy and dignified politeness.

"True, true," he exclaimed. "I had overlooked that danger. The proper place for *Le Loup* is beneath the waves."

"Are you the commander?" asked Tom, curiously.

"I am everything," replied the man. "Commander, inventor, engineer. There is no one but me on board, and, as it is all the work of my brain, there need be no one else. But you will permit me to show you the interior?"

Tom hesitated. He had a not unnatural desire to see the interior of one of these strange boats, and here was a splendid opportunity of gratifying it. But, at the same time, a mental picture appeared before his eyes of the captain of the *Brilliant* fuming up and down the bridge, impatient at the delay.

"Come, monsieur."

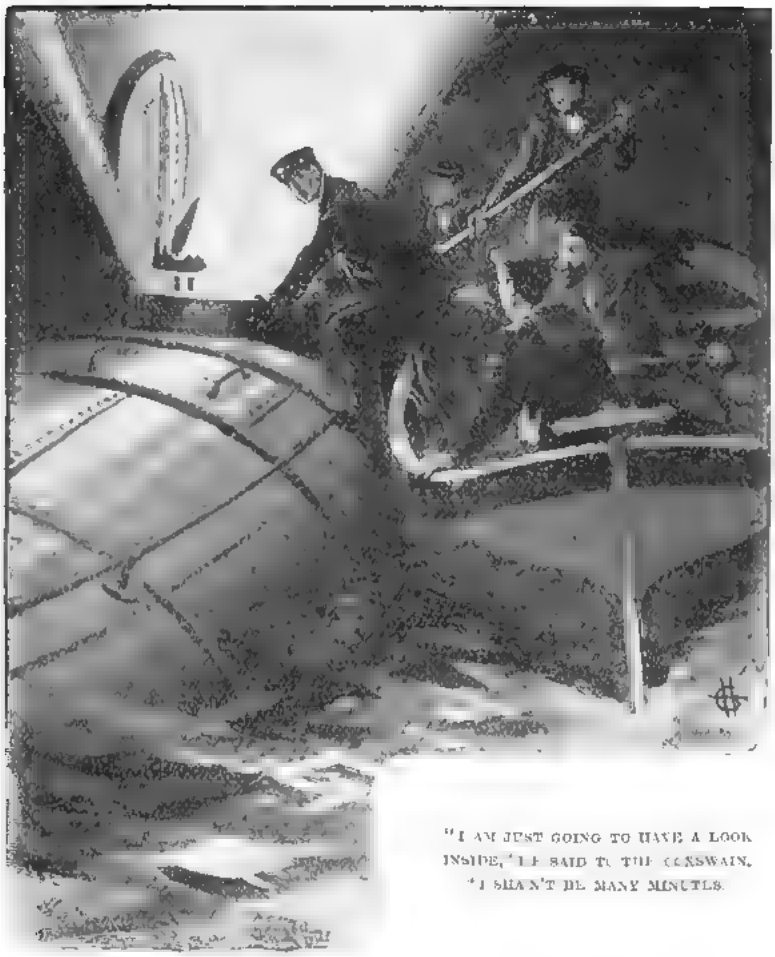
It was the persuasive voice of the Frenchman, and Tom hesitated no longer.

"I am just going to have a look inside," he said to the coxswain. "I sha'n't be many minutes."

He stepped on board, and descended, through the man-hole, into the cabin below.

The luxurious fittings of the little saloon astonished him, for he had expected to see little else but machinery. With the exception, however, of the steering apparatus, there was no machinery visible. There was a small mahogany sideboard and table, and at one end a lounge upholstered in blue plush. In the exact centre of the saloon a high seat was placed, which was so arranged that the person who sat on it would have his eyes level with the ports of the conning tower. A locker, or cupboard, in front of it contained a number of strange handles, which Tom guessed were connected with the mechanism that controlled the boat.

As the Frenchman followed Tom below a few moments later, he put his hand into the locker



"I AM JUST GOING TO HAVE A LOOK INSIDE," HE SAID TO THE COXSWAIN. "I SHAN'T BE MANY MINUTES.

where the levers were and moved one of them sharply downwards. Instantly Tom felt the boat sink beneath his feet—they were beneath the water.

He was rather surprised at this manœuvre, for he had not noticed that the inventor had fastened down the trap of the man-hole, although, of course, such must have been the case.

"I'm afraid," said Tom, "that I cannot spare the time to accompany you on a cruise down below, much as I should enjoy it. You see, I have to get back on board my ship as soon as possible."

The inventor laughed—a harsh, mirthless laugh that chilled the middy's blood.

"You are my guest," he said. "I am alone, and want company this Christmas Eve. As for returning to your ship—well, why should you return? Is there not quietness and peace in the cool and silent depths of the ocean?"

"I have no doubt there is," replied Tom uneasily, for somehow he did not like the look in the man's eyes—they gleamed rather wildly. Black, piercing orbs they were, too, overhung by bushy black eyebrows, and set deep in cavernous sockets.

"Then we will rest here, where my secret will be safe from the prying eyes of the world. There is always someone trying to ferret it out; for with fifty vessels like *Le Loup*, armed with torpedoes and dynamite tubes, the united fleets of Europe could be destroyed. Think of the power they would give to the nation that possessed them!"

"The submarine boats that have been tested up to the present have not proved very successful at their trials," hazarded Tom.

"True. In some respect or other they have all been found wanting, but *my* vessel is perfect. She can sink deeper, move more rapidly, and steer better than any of the others. That is why they want to rob me of my invention. But they never shall. At the bottom of the sea it is safe; and we will never rise again, never—never!"

His voice rose almost to a shriek as he uttered these words, and his eyes blazed with fury. Tom now realised, to his horror, that his host was hopelessly mad—at least, on the one subject of his great invention. It is not an uncommon idea with inventors that people are always trying to steal their secrets from them, and constant brooding on the subject has unhinged the reason of more than one genius. Such, no doubt, had been the case with the owner of *Le Loup*.

Tom Selwyn was possessed of fairly strong nerves, but he found it difficult to keep his voice as steady as he wished, as he asked whether the boat was still sinking.

"We have reached the bottom," replied the inventor. "But I must not forget my duties as a host," he pursued, in an entirely changed manner. "You will be getting hungry. Let us have supper."

Truth to tell, Tom had never felt less inclined

to eat in his life, although a very appetising meal was soon spread upon the table. However, he forced himself to eat the wing of a chicken, but all through the repast he was wondering whether he could get at the levers that controlled the movements of the boat. He might pretend an anxiety to understand the working of the mechanism—it would scarcely be pretence, though—but even then the madman would be careful to see that the boat did not rise to the surface, if he remained in his present mind. Or he might wait until his host fell asleep, and then endeavour to start the boat upwards himself. Once on the surface of the sea again, his comrades would come to his assistance, as they would certainly still be on the look-out for the reappearance of the submarine vessel. As a last resort, if persuasion or stratagem failed, he would have to try and overpower the inventor, but, as the latter was a powerfully built man, the issue of the struggle was likely to prove disastrous to the middy.

"Come, you are not enjoying yourself," exclaimed the inventor, breaking the silence. "Let us drink, as is the custom in your country at this season, to a merry Christmas."

Tom raised his glass, and repeated as heartily as he was able the time-honoured formula: "A merry Christmas." But what a hollow mockery it seemed! If he could not escape from this fiendish boat Christmas evening would probably find him a corpse, for it was unlikely that there was more than a twenty-four hours' supply of condensed air in the cylinders.

"How do these handles work the vessel?" asked Tom, in his most artless voice, as he rose from the table. "As a sailor, I naturally take a great interest in the working of submarine——"

"So you are one of those who would rob me, eh?" interrupted the other, with a look of fury. "But you shall not! I would kill you first! Kill you! Ha, ha! There is no need for that either. You are in your grave already—a living tomb! No help can reach you here! You may sing your favourite national song, 'Britannia Rules the Waves,' but Britain does not rule *beneath* the waves. I am the ruler here. I and King Death!"

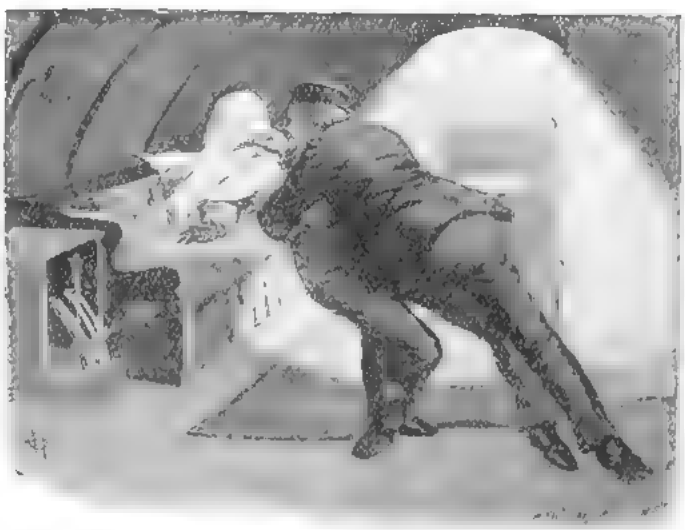
He had sprung up, and, while he raved, was standing with his back to the locker in which were the levers that controlled the machinery.

"*No help can reach you here!*" The words rang in Tom's ears like a knell as he stood facing the madman, with the table between them.

And so they stood, warily watching each other for what seemed to the young middy an eternity of time.

The air grew every moment more close and stifling; respiration was difficult, and Tom drew his breath in quick, short gasps. He felt that he was slowly suffocating, but he determined to make a fight for life. The last resource—a struggle with the madman.

With the promptitude of a British sailor he acted upon his determination, and his method of attack certainly took the inventor by surprise, for, with a quick movement, he seized one end of the tablecloth and jerked it off, sending decanters, glasses, plates, cutlery, and food into a corner of the saloon. The next instant, cloth in hand, he had flung himself upon the madman, enveloping him in the folds of the damask. Then a fierce struggle took place, the door of the locker was smashed in, and Tom, flinging out his hand to save himself from falling, caught hold of one of the levers and pulled it down.



CLOTH IN HAND, HE FLUNG HIMSELF UPON THE MADMAN.

The immediate effect of this was a sudden and violent lurch on the part of the boat, which caused the madman to stagger backwards and fall, striking his head against the corner of the table. He rolled over, apparently insensible, and Tom, panting and almost exhausted, climbed into the conning tower.

He could hear the rush of the water passing the sides of the vessel, and could tell by the peculiar motion of the hull that they were rising straight up. By the purest accident, then, he must have moved the right lever.

Presently, to his joy, he found they had reached the surface, for he could see through the glass ports of the conning tower a moving arm of light, which he knew must be the electric search-light of the *Brilliant*. It was the work of a few moments to unscrew the manhole cover and climb out on to the deck. About a couple of hundred yards away he saw the cutter, and beyond her again another of the cruiser's boats. They were out looking for him, or, rather, for the submarine vessel.

Tom hailed with all the strength of his lungs, and his shout was heard, for the cutter at once commenced pulling in his direction. Before it had covered half the distance, however, he felt *Le Loup* sink under him, and the next instant he was left struggling in the water. He could swim, so he was in no danger of drowning, and a minute later he was hauled over the gunwale of the cutter, wet through but safe.

The submarine boat had disappeared for ever, as, the hatch being open, she would fill directly she plunged below the surface, and under those circumstances it would be impossible for her to rise again. Whether the mad inventor had recovered consciousness and himself moved the lever that caused her to sink, there is no means of telling. His secret lies buried with him at the bottom of the sea.

* * * * *

Tom had to relate his adventure three times over that night—first to the captain and the lieutenants; secondly, to the wardroom officers; thirdly, to his messmates in the gunroom.

At last he turned into his hammock, and as he curled himself up under the blanket he thought to himself, "I believe I shall spend a merry Christmas after all, though an hour ago I certainly didn't expect to."

TOM HAILED WITH ALL THE STRENGTH OF HIS LUNGS.

GOING TO CATCH A TRAIN!

(Drawn by Louis Wain.)

The Strange Misadventure of Mendelssohn Mills.

By Harold Avery.

Sketches by G. Malcolm Patterson.

MR. MENDELSSOHN MILLS emerged from the brightly lit music warehouse into the chilly darkness of the raw December night; and, pulling up the worn velvet collar of his coat, paused on the edge of the pavement to ejaculate "Bother!"

In the main a disappointed man, a musician self-taught and without certificate or diploma to assist him in the realisation of his boyish dreams, he solaced himself with the assurance that, though only a piano-tuner in the employ of Messrs. Space & Space, he still belonged to an important branch of "the profession," and was therefore entitled to wear upon his head the felt hat of genius.

"You can run down to Broom Cross by the 7.32, and come back by the mail," had been Mr. Space's instructions. "Sorry to have to send you out on a night like this, but I promised Mr. Mortlock-Watson that it should be done some time to-day."

"NOT MUCH OF A NIGHT FOR TRAVELLIN'!" REMARKED THE NEW COMER.

On arriving at the station Mendelssohn flung himself into one corner of a third-class carriage attached to the 7.32 train, and, depositing his bag by his side, gave himself up to gloomy reflections.

Just as the guard's whistle sounded, a middle-aged man opened the door and entered the compartment. He was thick-set rather than stout, with the hands of a mechanic, and a round, patient-looking face. Mendelssohn set him down as a small shop-keeper or master mechanic, and noticed at the same time that he carried a small black bag exactly similar to the one which contained his own tuner's kit.

"Not much of a night for travellin'," remarked the new comer.

Mills admitted that it was not.

The stranger eyed him rather curiously for a moment, and then, nodding at the little bag, asked if he were a doctor.

"No, medicine is not my profession," said Mendelssohn, thawing slightly. "I am—er—a musician. I'm going to tune a piano."

"Now, I thought you was a professional of some kind," said the other. "You'll excuse my askin'. Plummin's my line; me and Jim has a place down nearly at the end of Raddle Street. Perhaps you may know it—Jacobs is the name."

Mills was forced to admit that he did not know the firm; but the fact of his new acquaintance recognising him at once as a "professional" made him feel quite kindly disposed towards the owner of the patient face and tool-worn hands; and, by way of being sociable, he remarked that he was going to Broom Cross.

"To Broom Cross, eh?" said Mr. Jacobs. "Well, now, *that's* peculiar, for 'tis to Broom Cross I'm goin' myself. I suppose," he continued, after a moment's pause, "that it wasn't Mr. Thomas Brown's piano you was goin' to tune?"

Mills answered "No," that his destination was the establishment of Mr. Mortlock-Watson.

"O-oh!" answered Mr. Jacobs meditatively. "I was merely askin'," he added, "because it's to Mr. Thomas Brown's I'm goin' myself."

Mendelssohn inquired if the two houses were anywhere near each other.

"No, they ain't," answered Mr. Jacobs. "What! never been to Broom Cross before? Then you don't know Mortlock-Watson's place? Well, never mind, I'll put you right."

Slowly the train dragged itself along through the fog and darkness, and as the conversation turned from professional to domestic topics, Mendelssohn began to feel strangely drawn towards his companion. A chance reference to the coming of the festive season caused Mills to ejaculate, "Oh, hang Christmas!" and then out it came, almost involuntarily, as it often does when a man is distracted and ready to go anywhere for human sympathy—a story sordid and mean enough to the ears of the rich, but of sufficient importance to the man who told it, crushed as he was under the weekly burden of attempting to make two and two total up five.

"I tried to get the berth of organist for the new church at Broom Cross, and if I had, that would have set me right; but the appointment lies practically in the hands of Mr. Mortlock-Watson, and a man whom he has always been interested in applied at the same time, and so I stood little or no chance."

"Oh, cheer up!" said Mr. Jacobs. "I've been in Queer Street myself many a time, but there's generally a way out somehow. You and the missis'll pull through all right."

Mendelssohn shook his head.

"I'm sorry to have troubled you with what doesn't concern you in the least," he added, as the lights of a station began to dance past the window; "but you yourself seemed like a man who's been through the mill, and —well, here we are!"

"Yes, this is Broom Cross," murmured his companion, standing up and taking his little bag down from the rack. "Hullo!—Hup!"

The train, stopping sooner than he expected, sent Mr. Jacobs sprawling on to the top of Mendelssohn, cramming the professional felt down over the latter's eyes, and nearly knocking the breath out of his body.

"Beg pardon, I'm sure!" exclaimed the plumber. "I'm always being served that trick, and yet I always forgets. Well, come on, and I'll put you straight. You may take my word for it, you'll need some guidin' a night like this, if you don't know the place."

The men passed out of the station gate into the fog and darkness beyond.

Stumbling along the dark, uneven road, now splashing through pools of mud and water, and then damaging his toes against big stones and brick-ends, Mendelssohn was forced to congratulate himself on having secured the services of a guide; for without someone to pilot him he might have wandered half the night in the labyrinth of dark lanes and turnings before arriving at his destination.

Mr. Jacobs, however, seemed to have a natural faculty for finding his way in the dark. Since leaving the station he had relapsed into silence, and trudged on with a light, elastic step, and without any of the stumbles and blunderings which marked the progress of his companion.

They passed a number of houses standing back in their own grounds, and at length, on arriving at a crossing, the plumber stopped.

"Now, let me see," he said. "You take this road and go straight on for a matter of three-quarters of a mile; then you'll come to a stone bridge; go over that, and turn sharp to your left, and Mortlock-Watson's is straight in front of you; you can't miss it. Good-night —or, no—perhaps I'll see you again at the station."

With a parting wave of his hand the speaker disappeared in the gloom, while Mills turned as directed, and started off at a brisk pace in the opposite direction. On and on he tramped; surely he had walked more than a mile, and yet there was no sign of the stone bridge spoken of by his friend. It was impossible to make a mistake, for the road was perfectly straight. A drizzling rain had begun to fall, and not a soul was abroad from whom he could ask for fresh directions. The best thing would be to inquire at some house, but on looking round he found he had evidently wandered beyond the bounds of Broom Cross, for not a building of any kind was to be seen.

Time was going on; at this rate he would never get his work done in time to catch the mail. He faced about and broke into a heavy trot, regardless of the mud which splashed him to the waist. Either he must have passed the stone bridge without noticing it, or his friend must have mistaken its whereabouts.

For nearly half-a-mile he jogged along, panting and puffing; then, though no bridge of any kind was to be seen, the lights of houses began to twinkle among the trees, and at length a by-way appeared which might be the one he sought.

It was little more than a lane, and after floundering up it some distance he was about to turn back, when straight in front of him the outline of a large mansion loomed up out of the darkness, and at the same time his eye caught a gleam of light glinting between the dense bushes of a shrubbery.

With an exclamation of relief he moved on

and the next moment arrived at what was evidently a side entrance. He pushed the gate, but found it fastened. A second and third time Mendelssohn tried it, but there was no doubt about its being locked. He paused a moment to consider, and then something happened, which, for the moment, made him feel a trifle queer. His ears were sharp as well as "musical," and he could have sworn that, somewhere close to him in the darkness, he had caught the sound of heavy breathing. He listened again, but all was still; then, as he turned and moved away to find the main entrance, he distinctly heard a rustle, as though someone moved among the shrubs. He walked on slowly, pretending not to notice; but the rustle was repeated, followed by a faint crackle, as though some heavy foot had descended on a dead branch.

"TURN SHARP TO THE LEFT, AND MORTLOCK-WATSON'S IS STRAIGHT IN FRONT OF YOU."

Mendelssohn's soul was not one which yearned for adventures; the man lurking in the shrubbery might be some desperate character whom it would be madness for him to tackle single-handed. The best course of action for him to pursue would be for him to inform one of the servants of what he had seen, and then the inmates of the house could act as they thought proper.

Handsome pillars of red brick flanked the main entrance, and above them an arch of ornamental ironwork served to support a round gas lamp, on which appeared the name of the house. Mills read it, and his heart sank—"Clybury."

Mr. Mortlock-Watson's establishment, he well knew, was "Broom Grange." His first impulse was to turn away with an exclamation of despair and disgust, then the recollection of that stealthy movement in the shrubbery caused him to alter his mind. To warn a man when thieves are on his premises is nothing more than a common duty which everyone owes to society. Mendelssohn pushed open the gate, and walked slowly up the broad sweep of gravel; but as he drew near the big porch he hesitated, and finally came to a stand. The thought occurred to him that he had, after all, very little ground for alarming the whole household. If he could find his way round to the stables, a word to one of the men-servants would be sufficient. He stepped off the gravel to take a short cut by crossing the lawn. Stay—was this right? Hullo!

He stumbled over a flower-bed, and before he could recover himself, three men sprang from among a neighbouring clump of bushes, and seized him with considerable violence by the arms and collar of his coat. Two wore plain clothes, while the third was in uniform.

"Got him!" was the simultaneous exclamation which burst from the trio.

This sudden seizure gave Mendelssohn a fright from which it took him some seconds to recover. At first he imagined he must have been outmanœuvred by the burglars; but the sight of the police-sergeant disposed of this conjecture.

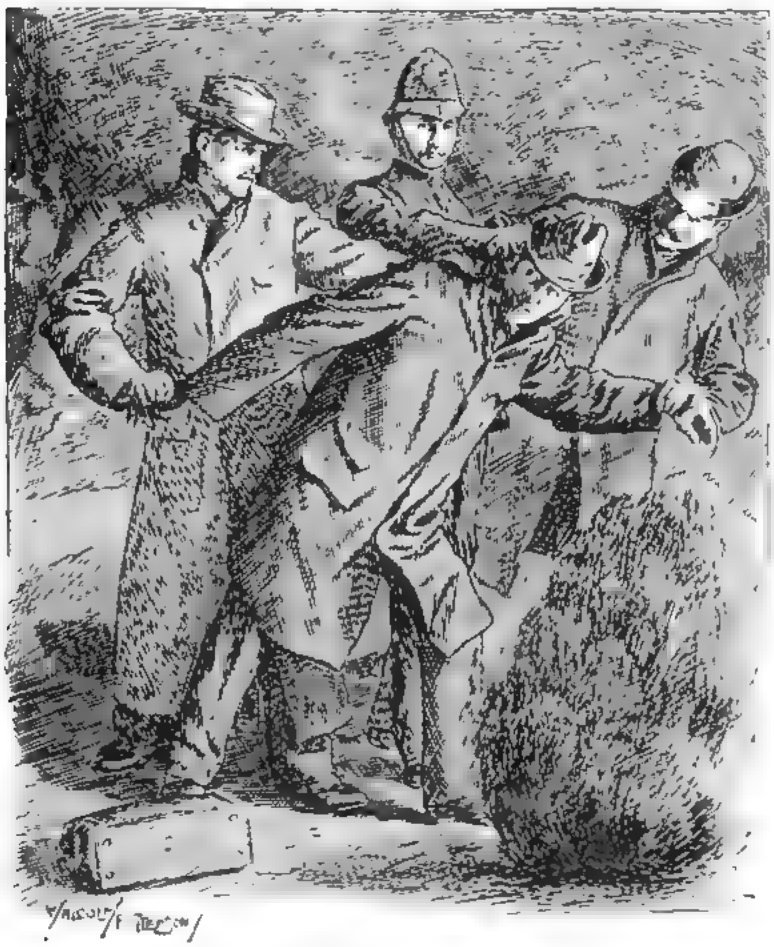
"A—ha! What is the meaning of this?" he gasped.

"Oh, you know well enough!" replied one of the plain-clothes men.

"Yes, we've been expecting you for the last hour," said the sergeant genially. "Another time make sure of your pals before you tell them your plans. Search him, Rogers, he may have a revolver in his pocket, and give us the same sort of treatment as he did Sam Stevens. He's a desperate fellow."

Hearing himself styled a "desperate fellow" somehow rather flattered Mendelssohn, and put him on his mettle. He began to expostulate with considerable heat; but not the slightest notice was taken of his remarks by either of the

three men, one of whom rapidly turned out his pockets, and then felt him all over as though about to take his measurements for a suit of clothes.



"A—HA! WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS?" HE GASPED.

"We'll take him up to the house," said the sergeant. "Mr. Fowler'll be glad to know he's caught." And the speaker winked in the darkness.

The idea of being made a public spectacle of increased Mendelssohn's rage ten-fold.

"Look here!" he cried, as his captors dragged him across the lawn; "I warn you—you shall suffer for this—this outrage! I tell you you're mistaken. I'm a piano-tuner. Look in my bag, and you'll find my instruments."

The cortège halted for a moment under the gas-lamp which illumined the porch.

"Open his bag," said the sergeant, shortly. The man addressed did as he was ordered, and immediately burst out laughing. A jemmy, a small dark lantern, some saws and files of curious shape, and a bunch of skeleton keys, were among the articles which, to Mills' utter astonishment, were one by one produced from the bag which he had been carrying.

"Well," exclaimed Rogers, "this is the rummiest set of piano-tunin' hinstruments I ever saw!"

"Don't try to fool us with any more of your nonsense," exclaimed the sergeant, with an impatient snort, at the same time giving the unfortunate musician a rough shake. "You're 'Slippery Jim' right enough! Now come on in."

Too much overcome with wrath and indignation to notice clearly what happened next, Mendelssohn had afterwards only a confused remembrance of standing in the centre of a spacious and handsomely furnished hall, surrounded by a group of gentlemen in evening dress, while further back a similar number of ladies, using the stairs as a sort of grand stand, viewed him with stifled exclamations of horror.

To this audience he heard himself described as "Slippery Jim," a well-known burglar, of whose premeditated attempt on "Clybury" the police had received timely warning.

"He tried the back gate first," concluded the sergeant, "but it was locked, or one of my men would have had him there. Then he come in at the front entrance as bold as brass, as if he was going to walk up and ring the bell; but he thought he'd better not do *that*, so he turned off and came slinking across the lawn, and we nabbed him. Then he tries to make out that he's a piano-tuner, and says his hinstruments are in his bag, and I'd just like to show you gentlemen what sort of hinstruments they are."

It was a fortunate thing for Mendelssohn that there happened to be a dinner-party that night at "Clybury." A pause followed while the bag was being produced, and this momentary silence was broken by rather a faltering voice coming from the stairs:—

"But he *is* a piano-tuner!"

"*What!*" exclaimed half-a-dozen male voices; while Mills, turning with the eagerness of a drowning man to clutch at the proverbial straw, recognised in the speaker the daughter of one of Space & Space's oldest customers.

"Yes," repeated the lady; "he always comes to tune our pianos, and his name is Mr. Mills, and not 'Slippery Jim.' At least," she added, as though unwilling to commit herself, "I never heard him called that before."

It was now Mendelssohn's turn to tell a story, which he did in rather a confused fashion, beginning at his capture and going backwards. Before half-a-dozen sentences had been uttered an idea seemed to strike him.

"Why," he exclaimed, "the fellow I travelled with in the train must be the man you want. Jacobs he called himself. He had a bag just like that, and he must have picked up mine in mistake!"

Further explanations followed; there was little doubt as to the true character of Mendelssohn's travelling companion, and the idea of "Slippery Jim's" chagrin at finding himself armed for a house-breaking expedition with a piano-tuner's outfit, moved Rogers to an outburst of laughter in which most of the bystanders joined. Mills was forced to admit that there was some excuse for his mistaken arrest. The sergeant apologised; Mr. Fowler apologised; the lady of the house suggested a glass of wine; and the gentlemen proffered cigarettes. It was too late now to think of getting his business done that night; in fact, there was barely sufficient time left to catch the last train back to Pedleton.

"BUT HE IS A PIANO-TUNER!"

"I'll explain the matter to Mortlock-Watson in the morning," said Mr. Fowler, laughing. "I always travel with him; and Sam, the boy, shall take a lantern and show you the nearest way back to the station."

* * *

The following morning, as Mendelssohn entered the music warehouse, one of the assistants called to him from behind the counter—

"Here's a note for you, Mr. Mills; a boy left it this morning, and said there was no answer."

The envelope was addressed in a scrawling hand:—

MR. MILLS,

PIANER-TUNER.

and was further adorned with a number of dirty finger-marks. Mendelssohn opened it; and, by

the time he had finished perusing its contents, the gloomy look upon his face had changed to one of anger and astonishment.

DEAR SIR (began this extraordinary epistle),

I thought you mite be interested in heering what became of me after saying goodnight to you last evenin. I went down to Broom Cross with the intenshun of doing some business I'd planned beforehand, but during our talk the thought ockurred to me that for once in a way I mite try my hand at pianer-tunin. I took the liberty of borrowin your tools, and makin out I was you. They left me alone in the droring room so after I'd thumped the old pianer a bit, I helped myself to a few things that took my fansy, and then had a look 'round some of the bedrooms, and came away. I didn't ferget you though, for I wound up several of the wires until they bust, to make a bigger job for you, and I beg to inclose a fiver for use of the tools which you'll find just behind the gate, as I left in rather a urry. Don't make no bones about takin it; I know from what you sed you're hard up, and if I could have got at it I'd have sent you a bottle of the old chap's wine for your Christmas dinner.

You sed I seemed like a man who'd been through the mill, Well, I've been *on* it, meny a time, for I'm

SLIPPERY JIM.

Hardly had Mendelssohn finished reading this communication, when the glass doors of the warehouse swung open, and in walked Mr. Space, followed by Mortlock-Watson himself.

"Ha, Mills!" exclaimed the former. "Just the man we want! How on earth——"

"Excuse me, sir," interrupted Mendelssohn, anticipating the question. "But will you kindly read this—this abominable letter?"

The two gentlemen glanced over the contents of the note; then Mortlock-Watson burst out laughing.

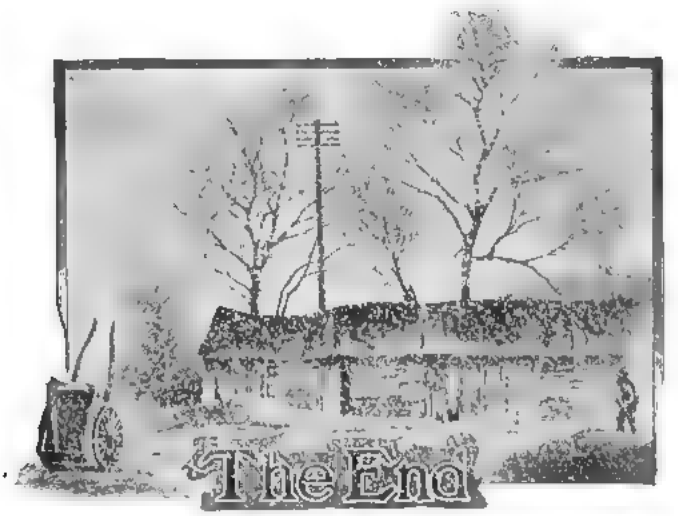
"The scamp served you a nice trick, I must say!" he exclaimed.

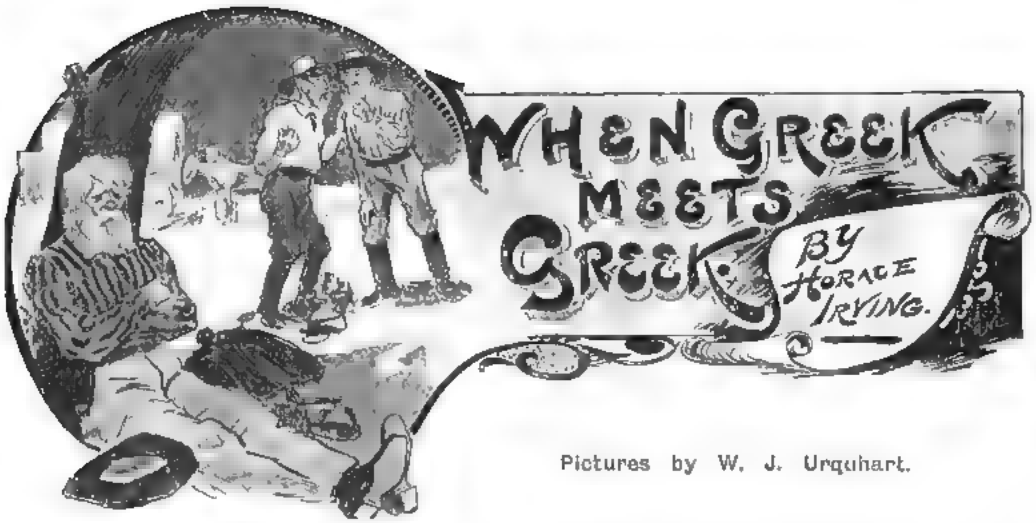
"It's not that, sir, that I mind," answered the piano-tuner, choking with suppressed indignation. "It's the reflection on my character—on my appearance. The very fact of his presuming to offer me a bribe, and—and the idea of his breaking those wires—it's atrocious!"

Mr. Mortlock-Watson's shrewd eye had been rapidly glancing once more over the latter part of the letter, and now they rested with an amused, yet kindly, look upon the speaker.

"Let me see, Mr. Mills," he remarked; "did not you write me some little time back offering your services as organist at St. Stephen's? Well, the gentleman whom we appointed finds he cannot undertake the post; and that being the case, I shall be pleased to re-consider your application. Mr. Space has kindly promised that you shall run down and put the piano right this afternoon, and you might step across to the church and try the instrument."

The two gentlemen walked on towards Mr. Space's private office. Mendelssohn waited until the door had closed behind them; then, deliberately removing from his head the felt hat of genius, he kicked it up to the ceiling; whereupon the assistant, who was a football enthusiast, clapped his hands, and not inappropriately shouted: "Goal!"





Pictures by W. J. Urquhart.

"I TELL you," insisted the foxy-faced one, "we want a third party; someone to be ready with the spare horses while I'm waiting with the wagon, and you're handin' over the forty-rod to the Injuns."

"While *I'm* handin' of it over!" exclaimed the other, who was only distinguishable from his companion by being, if anything, a trifle dirtier. "I thought when I entered inter pardnership wid you as how you sed *you'd* do the handin' over!"

"Well, hang it! I'll do it, as I've done it before," conceded Isaac—familiarly called Ike—the foxy-faced individual aforesaid. "But we want help, and, as acciydents will happen, s'posing now we could manage to do without our hired man at the 'leventh hour—s'posing he got drunk, or got left behind—you savey?—it might save us the trouble of paying him. I guess the Injuns want all the scalps they kin get in them days, anyhow. There's lots of whiskey-soakers around here dead-broke that would be only too glad to come."

"Bully for you, pard; you're a nat'ral born genyius!" exclaimed Pat, in a burst of genuine admiration at his mate's eye to business. This admiration for anyone who was a greater villain than himself was the only genuine thing in his composition.

They were a couple of unmitigated scoundrels both, the shady nature of their antecedents being only equalled by their decidedly disreputable appearances. They were camped just outside Fort Benton, on the banks of the Missouri, and it was the summer of '72, when that town was thronged by a nondescript crowd of trappers, Indians, and Canadian half-breeds, who came down from the north to trade their wagon-loads of buffalo and other skins. Upon the whole it was a "tough" crowd—very tough.

The two partners emerged from under the shade of their wagon, and went towards two or three of the dead-beats aforesaid, who seemed in that unenviable physical condition known as "suffering recovery," and asked them, one after the other, if they would like to take a job. But, after comprehensive glances at the two worthies, none of them seemed to care about work.

"It 'pears to me, mate," remarked Ike disgustedly and uncharitably to his friend, "that wherever you go they seem to get on to you—you've got a physog that would spoil any outfit."

Pat was quivering with honest indignation, and was about to retort, when he caught sight of a solitary individual resting under a scraggy tree, with a saddle and bridle lying by his side.

"Shet up, ye fool!" he said to his partner; "here's a chap that looks as if he would like to clear out—let's tackle him."

The man in question was in no way remarkable. A shock head of sandy-coloured hair was in keeping with a face and eyes that always seemed the same. Their expression was inscrutable as that of the sphinx. He wore a dirty pair of cord pants, a shirt in the same condition, and a soft felt hat lay on the ground alongside. Not a man of any obvious perspicacity, and doubtless an easy tool in the proper hands; moreover, he looked like one who had been through the mill, and would not be too scrupulous. At least, so thought the two partners as they stood in front of him.

Then Ike explained their *modus operandi*, telling the stranger how they intended travelling right into Canada with their cargo of contraband whiskey, and, seeking out a camp of Cree Indians, trading it for skins.

"You see," he added confidentially, "after we've handed the liquor over we'll have to clear for our nat'ral, the Injun temperyment being sich that when the fire-water begins to work it itches for scalps."

At this pleasant little sally Pat grinned admiringly; but not even the ghost of a smile flitted across the face of the stranger as, with a decidedly Scotch accent, he deliberately said:—

"Aweel, I'm thinking there's na hairm in that. I'm yer man—Alexander McTurk of that ilk. I've got twa horses down there by the bit burnie, but I can pick them up when we pull out."

Then, rolling up his blanket, and picking up his saddlery, he betook himself to the camp of the Philistines. There Ike, with an unwonted display of generosity, produced a pannikin and a black bottle to which the Scot helped himself so liberally that the former repented of his rashness. That night, when it grew dark, they hitched up, pulled into Benton, put the liquor on board, and when the grey dawn broke they were wending their lonely way over gleaming alkali flats and brown stretches of buffalo-grass and sage-bush. It was only when they unhitched at a creek to have their first meal, and to rest during the day, that they noticed their companion's horses.

"Crickey, mate!" remarked the worthy Isaac, "I guess you've got a couple of good cayuses. Didn't know as how you were a judge of horse-flesh."

"I'm thinking there are worse horses in the country than these," remarked McTurk. "Anyhow, I came by them honestly." And his eyes wandered absently over the leaders of the team owned by the enterprising partners.

"Hang the haggis-eater!" commented Pat in an aside to his mate. "But, I say, pardner, I guess them horses of his are worth two hundred dollars."

"Hold your tongue, you eejut!" rasped out Ike, looking apprehensively towards the Scot. "If he didn't seem half asleep I'd swear he heard you."

To tell the truth, though within easy ear-shot, McTurk's face was as impassive as that usually observed on a ship's figure-head.

They journeyed leisurely over the rolling prairie.

Their hired man they found invaluable. He did what was required of him quietly and well; but still that did not prevent his masters persecuting him with petty annoyances, which became more pronounced the farther they got from civilisation. McTurk, however, either did not or would not see the slights that were heaped upon him. Nothing seemed to arouse in him the faintest show of passing interest. Once a cloud of dust and a significant black wave appeared on the eastern horizon, grew on the sight, and rolled eastward. When the whiskey-traders saw it, their faces became ashy-grey, and they forgot to swear—a sure sign with them that something was seriously the matter. McTurk gazed upon the strange sight with eyes that seemed utterly indifferent. He rode on, as usual, slowly ahead, his right leg thrown carelessly over the horn of the saddle, and blowing tobacco smoke into the air. The callous indifference of the man irritated the respectable Isaac.

"I say, pard," he yelled after him disgustedly, "do you know what that there means? Waal, then, it's a buff'ler stampede—millions of buff'ler, mind; and if they happen to come our way, your name's Dennis, sure! You can gamble your pile on that."

Then for the first time the apparently indifferent one asserted himself.

"Aweel, freends," he observed, "if I thocht the beasties would be coming this way, it would na' be sitting here I'd be. But as they'll pass about seeven miles to the north I dinna quite see the use o' fashing my heid, and getting grey in the gills, like some folk I ken."

He rode on again, as if oblivious to all things mundane.

"Darn the fool!" commented the somewhat reassured Ike. "But I'm blowed if I don't think he's more knave than fool. There he goes, sound asleep again!"

At last they crossed the lines and entered Canada. They were now in the wild country on the southern slope of the Cypress Hills. They struck Wild Horse Creek, and travelled up its grassy bottom. This was the land of the Cree Indians.

One sultry afternoon, when they were camped in a little ravine, under the shade of some cotton-wood trees, Ike went to the brow of a neighbouring hill to reconnoitre. They saw him look around, and then gaze intently in a certain direction. In another minute he was signalling to someone with a green bough he had taken with him for that purpose.

Soon an Indian stood beside him, and in a few minutes more Ike returned to the camp, talking volubly to his visitor in Cree.

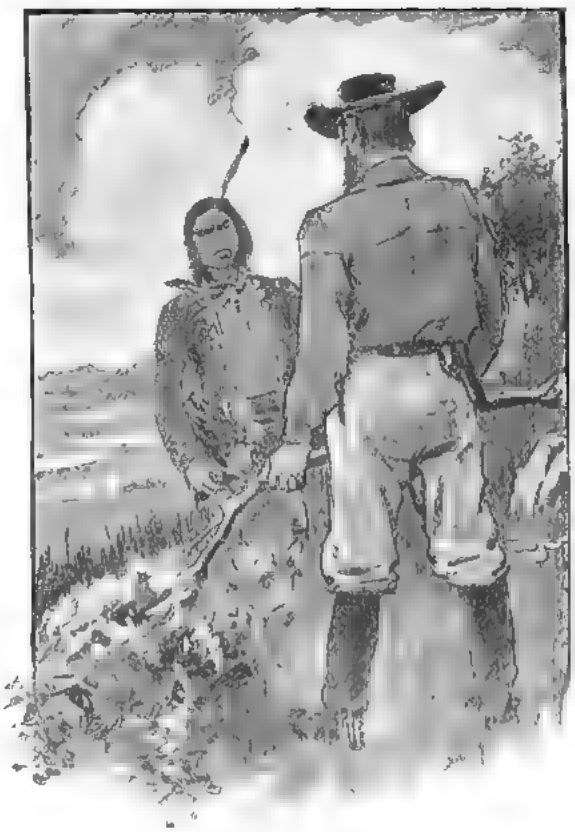
"Our trip's at an end," explained Pat to McTurk. "It's the band of Indians we've been looking for."

Then solemnly, for there is no ceremony of State more impressive than the joining of hands of the red man, there were mutual introductions.

McTurk was introduced by Ike, with a hint of

satire in his speech, to the mighty warrior rejoicing in the name of Young-man-afraid-of-his-wife's-mother, as "The Great Scotty, the Thirsty Rider of the Plains."

After some considerable talk an arrangement was arrived at with the Indian to supply his camp with liquor, skins to be taken in exchange. After a small and judicious foretaste of the fire-water he withdrew to communicate with his own camp about a mile away. Then a wonderful change came over Ike's manner. Before the arrival of the Indian he had been as sour as vinegar in speech and behaviour, now no one would have thought butter could melt in his mouth. Probably he overdid his part, for McTurk, whom hitherto no amount of abuse or covert sneers had moved, was seen to go behind the wagon with an anxious expression on his face, and deliberately scratch his head. He then came back refreshed, and with a face which outrivalled the complacency observed on that of a street door-knocker. But Ike's change of manner did not end here. He drew off a bottle of whiskey from one of the kegs and gave it to McTurk.



SOON AN INDIAN STOOD BESIDE HIM.

"Here, pardner," he said, "drink hearty. I guess it's the last drink you'll have for some time."

He winked to Pat as he saw the avidity with which the sandy-haired one seized the bottle and dispensed with a drinking-cup.

"We'll leave him alone," whispered Ike to his mate, "and if he's not dog-gone in half-an-hour, may I be jiggered! That's all."

"You stay and watch the camp," he said to McTurk. "Pat and I are going to the Injun camp for them skins." And off they went.

McTurk's conduct on their departure was worthy of that strange man. He deliberately helped himself to a drink, and then poured the remainder of the bottle upon the prairie grass. He crawled under the wagon, and lay on his back holding the empty bottle loosely by the neck. The sun had passed out of sight behind the bench, and now a shadow was creeping up the opposite hillside. The running water close by was murmuring strangely to itself, the cottonwood trees on the opposite side of the coullee assumed fanciful shapes, and signed to him in the most absurd fashion. The nodding sunflowers winked at him with eyes of fire. He was fast slipping into the land of dreams, when, hard by, he heard the dull patter of mocassined feet. He was wide awake in an instant. It was his comrades returning with some half-dozen Indians carrying bales of skins. Next moment his head dropped back on the turf, he lay flat on his back, his legs and arms were shot out in the most unpicturesque manner possible, and the air resounded with a nasal drone that for finish and tone put his much-beloved native bagpipes in the shade.

The Indians threw their bundles on the ground and crowded round the wagon. Never before had McTurk been honoured with such a large and appreciative audience. It was a triumph for the partners, and an eloquent testimony to the potency of the fire-water. The Crees gave expression to their feelings in many an admiring "Ough! Ough!"

"Now, pardner,' said Ike to Pat, as he took the empty bottle from the hand of the apparently drunken man-servant, "just fill up this bottle, and when he wakes he'll take another drain and go to sleep again. When we come back from taking the liquor to the camp, we'll hitch up and clear out, not forgetting to take his two mokes. I guess that when the Injuns get on the loose with

the fire-water in them, he'll have no more use for them."

"How the beggar sleeps!" commented Pat.

As soon as the partners, with the Indians carrying the kegs of spirits amongst them, had left the camp, the snores of McTurk ceased as suddenly as they had been called into existence. He crawled from under the wagon, made a hearty meal—he might have little time within the next twenty-four hours for eating—put the bales of skins and all their paraphernalia into the wagon, and then hitched up the horses, tying his own two behind.

It was getting dark, and the eerie silence that settles down on those vast prairie lands was almost oppressive. Then on a breath of wind that strayed down the coullee strange sounds were borne. It was for all the world as if human beings were trying to imitate a pack of hounds in full cry; only the measured beat of the Indian drums told him that the orgie had begun. His employers would soon be back for their team and goods so as to get clear away before the Indians became maddened by the fire-water.

He leapt into the wagon, and, drawing up the side of the coullee, was soon safe upon the bench.

A ruddy glow among the trees far away up the valley caught his attention. He paused for a moment to look. Around a huge fire danced horrible fantastic figures that sent a shiver through him—impish figures, truly, showing in bold relief against the red glare. Long buffalo robes flowed from their shoulders; some seemed to have tails like demons, and nearly all had shaggy heads and manes with great protruding horns. They whooped and yelped. The dance of witches in Alloway's auld haunted kirk was not more ghastly. Round and round spun the demons; *pom, pom, pom!* went the hollow sounding drums. The sight was horrible, fascinating. He roused himself, turned his horses, cracked his quirt, and away the leaders went at a rattling pace. His partners, who would have sacrificed him, could follow as best they might.

"They called me a haggis-eater!" he cried aloud, steeling his heart, "but it's a far cry to Loch Awe!"

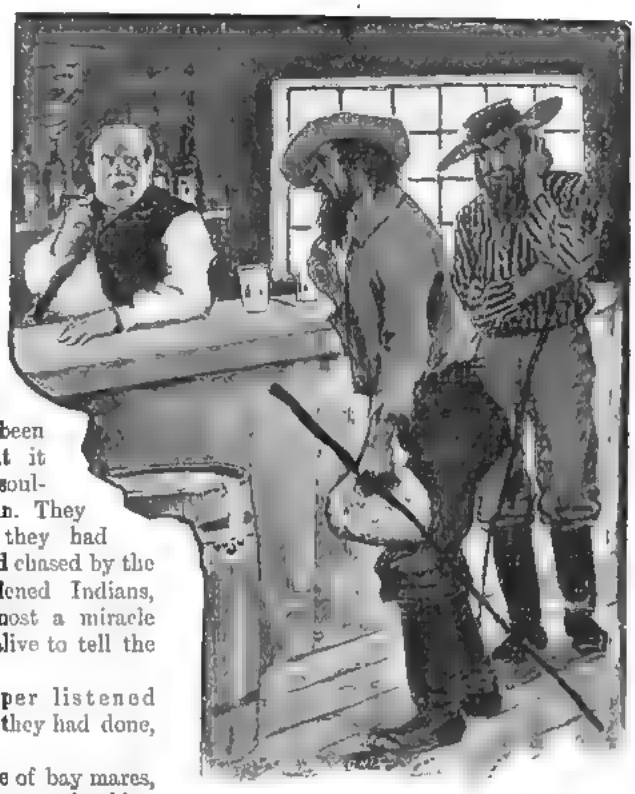
* * * * *

A month later two foot-sore and ragged tramps entered Fort Benton, in Montana. There was a pinched look, and the impress as of a mortal terror on their faces. They stopped at a saloon that seemed doing a somewhat quieter business than the others, and the proprietor asked them somewhat suspiciously what their business might be.

Then Ike, for it was indeed our old friend, as if it gave him some relief to unburden his heart, told

HITCHED UP THE HORSES, TYING HIS OWN TWO BEHIND.

of the way in which he and his honest mate had lately been victimised. He related how, having handed over the liquor to the Indians, they had gone back to their camp to hitch up and clear out, when they discovered that horses, wagon, skins, and everything had disappeared. Their hired man, whom they had left drunk, had disappeared also. It was a mysterious business altogether. Of late a suspicion as to the part their hired man had played in the matter had been haunting them, but it was an idea too soul-harrowing to entertain. They also related how they had been followed up and chased by the drunken and maddened Indians, and how it was almost a miracle that they were now alive to tell the tale.



ASKED THEM SOMEWHAT SUSPICIOUSLY WHAT THEIR BUSINESS MIGHT BE.

The saloon-keeper listened patiently, and when they had done, inquired:—

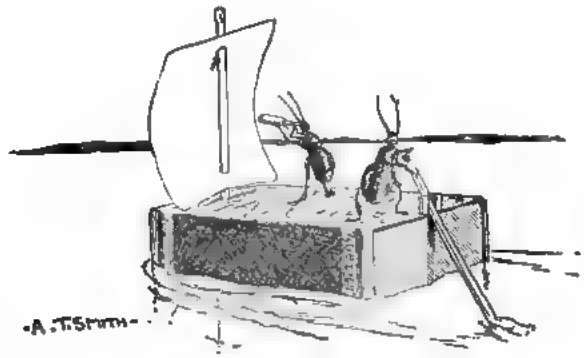
"Had you a couple of bay mares, branded 'M' on the near shoulder, and two roan horses branded 'Bar H' on the off side?"

"That was them," observed Ike and Pat.

"And had your man a great sandy-coloured head of hair like a horse-hair mop, a beard of the same material, and an expression on his face that looked as if it belonged to a graven image?"

"That's him! that's him!" chorussed the surprised and heart-stricken pair. "But you surely don't mean to tell us as how——"

"Waal, thet's so," interrupted the store-keeper coolly. "I guess as how it's about three weeks ago since that gent came here. He sold the skins over at the store at a stiffish price, and the wagon and team to my neighbour, Deacon Thompson. Two rather goodish saddle-horses he sold to yours truly. He took the first boat down the Missouri. He remarked, as he took a drink with me over this 'ere bar, jest before starting, as how he guessed he'd make for the old home; an honest man and a tenderfoot like himself, he reckoned, were always getting left in a country like this. Nominate your pizins, gentlemen."



"LAND ON THE STARB'D BOW, SIR!"

A Happy Christmas, as well as a Merry Christmas, is what I wish all my readers—boys and girls, men and women, at Home and Abroad. To all of you within these sea-girt islands I send my heartiest greetings, and with those in our Colonies and elsewhere I shake hands in cordial fancy. May you, years hence, remember the Old Fag's first Christmas greeting, the forerunner, let us hope, of very many messages of a like nature!

"As well as" a Merry Christmas. Perhaps you wonder at this phrase. Well, you see, a Merry Christmas is not always a sincerely Happy Christmas. There are various ways of being merry. To be happy is different. Men will laugh and joke with bitterness gnawing at their hearts. Happiness, you see, is not merely merriment. To spend a happy Christmas you must help others to be happy, and you must realise what Christmas is, and why we celebrate this annual winter feast. The Christmas bells, and the holly, and the Christmas cards, and letters, and presents — these are tokens of a season when "goodwill on earth" should make us more tender one to another. This is a time to forget and forgive—a time when there should enter our hearts that peace which "passeth man's understanding."

A "BULL'S-EYE" STAMP.

"Dear Christmas Days, how fair ye seem,
Glad, holy, and sublime!
Like prints of angel feet ye gleam
Along the path of time!
Foot-prints whereon sweetheart flowers blow,
By worldly storms unriven,
That we may mark them as we go,
And find our way to heaven."

Christmas Books! What delightful memories these two words call up—memories of such long-ago times, when we sat in front of the blazing logs and "somebody" read to us those dear old stories the like of which will never be written again, and, alas! will never be read again by that "somebody" who could render the humour so richly, and the pathos with such sweet tenderness. Is there not in every family "somebody" who can read Christmas books better than anybody else? You, boys and girls, who return to the old rooftree every Christmas as regularly as the tick of the clock—you know the "somebody" I mean.

Who has not read these "Christmas books"? The characters in them seem to bob up in our memories quite naturally as Christmas comes round every year. Tiny Tim and his father and Mr. Scrooge—the ever familiar names—don't you remember that Christmas dinner of the Cratchit family?

"A Merry Christmas to us all, my dears. God bless us!" Which all the family re-echoed.

"God bless us everyone!" said Tiny Tim the last of all.

Dickens wielded the pen of a benevolent magician. Now you find him blazing with wrath, now asking tears of us, and now rippling with laughter. What a splendid picture was that one he drew of Christmas forgiveness. Bob Cratchit, the over-worked and underpaid little clerk, still had a corner in his heart for the hard Scrooge, his master.

"Mr. Scrooge," said Bob. "I'll give you Mr. Scrooge, the Founder of the Feast!"

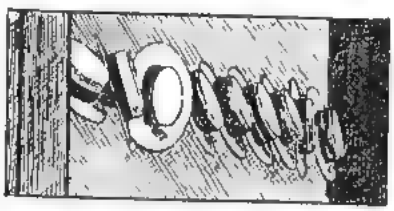
"The Founder of the Feast indeed!" cried Mrs. Cratchit, reddening. "I wish I had him here. I'd give him a piece of my mind to feast upon, and I hope he'd have a good appetite for it."

"My dear," said Bob, "the children. Christmas Day."

Was ever a more gentle sentiment expressed in four little words?

Don't you remember the battle between the cricket on the hearth and the kettle on the fire desperately endeavouring to boil, what time Mrs. Peerybingle waited for "her John"?

There was all the excitement of a race about it. Chirp, chirp, chirp! Cricket a mile ahead. Hum, hum, hum—m—m! Kettle making play in the distance, like a great top. Chirp, chirp, chirp! Cricket round the corner. Hum, hum, hum—m—m! Kettle sticking to him in his own way; no idea of giving in. Chirp, chirp, chirp! Cricket fresher than ever. Hum, hum, hum—h—m! Kettle slow and steady. Chirp, chirp, chirp! Cricket going in to finish him. Hum, hum, hum—m—m! Kettle not to be finished. Until at last they get so jumbled together, in the hurry-skurry, helter-skelter, of the match, that whether the kettle chirped and the Cricket hummed, or the Cricket chirped and the kettle hummed, or they both chirped and both hummed, it would have taken a clearer head than yours or mine to have decided with anything like certainty.



SUMMER.

Goodness! I could chat to you everlastingly of these "Christmas Books," but I must on to other things.

In consequence of Christmas matter, "When You Leave School," and "Reviews of Magazines," are held over until next month. Mr. Manning Foster's article in the January number will deal with the Cape Mounted Police, and other Colonial police forces.

WINTER.

Drawn for the "Special Page" by Harry Chamberlain.

In our Boat-Race Number (March, 1900) I am going to publish an original ballad by the late Judge Hughes, author of "Tom Browne's School-days." This describes, in swinging style, how, in 1843, the Henley Cup was won by *seven* Oxford men against *eight* Cambridge men. I have in my possession the original manuscript of this poem, written *fifty-six years ago*, when "Tom" Hughes was an undergrad. at Oxford. I need hardly add that the versical venture in question will see the light of print for the first time in our Boat-Race Number, so *look out for it*.

"A Match for a Million," a story which you will find in this number, is a fine specimen of mental gymnastics. Mr. Harold Macfarlane, the author of it, can lay claim to imaginative qualities almost on a par with those of Mr. Rider Haggard. I have read many tales of madmen, but the old farmer in this adventure certainly bears away the biscuit.

H. Childers is good enough to send me the "bull's-eye" stamp which you will find reproduced on page 307. It is a curiosity, because the post office stampers very rarely hit the mark so accurately as here represented.

Now for a letter which makes me feel that it is just as well there is no Mrs. O. F.:—

Dear Old Fag,—no, that sounds so cold.—*Dearest* Old Fag,—I like you most awfully, though in your portrait in the editorial you look rather—rather old. How old are you? If I send you my birthday book, would you mind writing your name in it? I think THE CAPTAIN is the jolliest mag. in all the world, and you are the dearest Old Fag.—With love, "EVE."

If Eve sends her birthday book, the Old Fag will certainly put "The Old Fag" opposite a certain date, but he will not say how old he is, because he is a vain old chap. He must request Eve to enclose stamps for return of book, because, if people didn't enclose stamps, the vain old chap would soon find himself in—well, not to put too fine a point upon it—the 'House of Work."

"Quis" sends me a photo of Hitchin's School, Hobart, Tasmania, which I have put in a drawer for future use. One of these days I hope to publish "A Page of Colonial Schools." Will Colonial readers send photos for this?

Coupons must not be sent on post-cards. Remember this, once and for all time. Sorry for those competitors whose post-cards were returned to them in a Stamp Competition a month or two

back. We will have another of that sort soon—in fact, Mr. Gooch is now preparing one.

Extract from an encyclopædia of the future: The football referee is an unpopular two-legged animal. He is found in all parts of the world, but the finest specimens are to be seen in the northern counties of England, where he is much hunted by the spectators of important matches; there is little fear of his extermination, as he is protected by law. A thoroughbred referee may always be known by the way he fortifies himself against all disputes, and favours no man. The mongrel referee, on the other hand, will not abide by his word, and will invent rules to support his own arguments. A sure sign of a mongrel is that he is always ready to argue. The football referee is only to be seen in England during the winter months. His whistle is unlike a bird's, resembling more that of a policeman.—C. HUBERT WOLFF.

R. W. G. (New Zealand) sends the following queer example of a printer's mixture:—

A Peel Forest correspondent of a Christchurch paper says that the winter of 1860 will be hard to beat, both monkey was sitting in an arm-chair, winter most of the cabbage trees near Ashburton were killed by frost, and a bullock dray and team were taken over the Hakaterama river on the ice. in the winter of 1889 his cask of beer froze csolid, and he was a total abstainer for two months. But this was very far back in the hills.

"Tom Browne's Comic Annual," let me remind you, will be on the stalls very shortly after this number of THE CAPTAIN finds its way to those open-air abodes. Buy it and try it. Take it with your tea. The most laughable Christmas booklet I have ever seen—and, being an old man, I have seen a many! The price is SIXPENCE.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A Mother (S. C. F.).—Very pleased to hear we are so appreciated in your family circle. Your competition suggestions are excellent. Please send some more.

S. S. B. thinks I ought to give some clubmen a chance of comparing themselves with other young cricketers. For example, a friend of "S. S. B.'s" (Eric M. Wilkins, of the Rusholme Club, Manchester) performed as follows this summer: 45 matches; 5 times not out; 1,009 runs. He also took 123 wickets for an average of 9½ runs per wicket—all this against crack teams. I congratulate Mr. Wilkins, and shall be glad to publish any further "performances" of this sort which are sent to me.

F. A. T. (PECKHAM).—You ask for my candid opinion respecting your drawings. Here it is, then. I strongly advise you not to go in for black-and-white art, further than with the object of decorating your letters or amusing your friends. You have no sense whatever of perspective, or light and shadow. You will earn more money in a merchant's office, as your handwriting is very passable. That, "F. A. T.," is my candid opinion.

Briton sends me a very interesting letter. He mentions that he hasn't got a sister, and wishes he had. Now, you fellows who are always running down sisters, what do you think of that? "Briton" seems to be a good type of the British school-boy, and I wish him all good luck in work and play. He holds a high position in his school: let him see to it that he always, under every circumstance, upholds the honour of that position.

Leonard Stanley Davis, River Bank, Wangamú, New Zealand, would like to correspond with another boy about sixteen years of age. He would also like to see an article in these columns on the "Care of Pets," and if he keeps his eye steadily on our pages, he will see that article. S'long, Leonard!

E. S. (EASTBOURNE).—(1) For photos of tennis-players you should write to R. W. Thomas, 41, Cheapside, E.C. (2) The following are two good and up-to-date books on the game "Lawn Tennis," by Wilberforce, price 1s., and the volume of "Lawn Tennis" in the "Badminton Library," price half-a-guinea.

Wee Boneen.—Yes, the young lady in the middle of the "Pretty Sister" page (Oct.) was the winner of the gold brooch—that is to say, her *brother* won it, and courteously handed it over to her.

Sillyhp Leep.—A nice little letter. Thank you, Miss—er—Miss—er—thank you, Miss—er—er—(very sorry—your name quite beats me!).

Canoeists (PONTEFRACT).—You can obtain full instructions from the Editor, the *Skipper*, Clock House, Arundel Street, Strand, London. Send stamped envelope.

H. E. W.—Perhaps.

R.—Yes.

L. A. Watson.—The "conditions" explain everything. Read them.

G. H. Leslie.—Your letter cheered me. Very glad you appreciate our various features. Letters like yours help us in deciding what to have and what not to have. Your physical development is pro-dig-ious!

P. Cavanagh.—The portrait appeared in so many papers that I did not think it necessary to include it in THE CAPTAIN. We have no space for the other feature you suggest.

Maisie.—Again! "*Only a girl!*" You ought to be ashamed of yourself, Miss. Well, I suppose I must answer your question. I believe an autograph letter from Sir Henry Irving is worth quite 10s., but why should you wish to sell it? Surely the fact that you possess an autograph letter from such a great man is worth more to you than ten sordid shillings!

"Ab Initio."—Cassell's "Anglo-French Dictionary" will, I think, meet your requirements. The price is 3s. 6d.

Harry B.—An excellent letter—manly, frank, to the point. (1) Tell her I'm very pleased to hear of this friendship. It is the sort of friendship I like to hear of. (2) You may grow another inch or two yet. (3) Your sleeping hours (ten to seven) couldn't be improved upon. (4) You are quite right not to smoke.

An Egyptian Old Boy says that I "must consecrate a few pages for educational and scientific lectures and studies, as well as for inventions and discoveries." Anybody second this motion?

Mus. Doc.—Afraid I cannot afford the space for what you suggest.

Sussexer.—Some time next year.

Sketcher will find some practical wrinkles for would-be black-and-white artists in the August number "Editorial."

A Very Old Boy.—Oh dear! If you could see this office you would realise what an amount of work all our competitions and features entail. At present I cannot undertake what you suggest.

Errolline.—Your William III. five-shilling piece might be worth 10s.—it all depends upon its condition; the value of the bank token is 1s.; the farthing, dated 1821, is worth, if in good condition, not more than a penny.

E. R., junr.—Kindly remember that this is a magazine "for boys and *old* boys." The advertisement in question is intended for the *old* boys.

Boltonian.—(1) The choice of wood depends entirely on the mode of construction you intend to employ. If built over "shadows," thin mahogany planking will be found serviceable, and at the same time takes a very high polish, which reduces surface friction, and is preferable to paint. (2) We presume that the length of 2ft. given is the length over all; if so, in the case of a deep keel boat a beam of 4½ins. and a depth of 4½ins. will be found sufficient. (3) The distance from the top-mast truck to the deck should not exceed 2ft.

Briton.—I think your best plan would be to get a "Cyclostyle"—a rather expensive machine, but quite the best for duplicating copies of a publication such as yours. The address of the Cyclostyle Co. is 79, Gracechurch Street, E.C.

Hylda starts off in the usual way—"Although I am *only a girl!*" She says that THE CAPTAIN was recommended to her by a boy friend only a couple of months ago, whereupon she ordered all the copies from No. 1, and now she says that the only fault she can find is that we don't come out weekly instead of by the month. She concludes with love to myself and all the staff. Personally, being a veteran, I can, with all propriety, waft "Hylda" a return message of the same quality, but as regards the staff—no, the staff is too young.

Anxious.—Send stamped envelope.

Artery.—Consult a doctor. I cannot answer medical questions.

Dublin.—If you write to Messrs. Hands & Co., Numismatists, 16, Strand, London, W.C., they will be pleased to give you the information you require and to value the coin you mention, but do not omit to enclose a stamped addressed envelope.

F. G. Bristow. Thanks for letter and cricket results.

Stewart Davenport.—Remember we go to press a long time ahead of publication. I cannot give my opinion as to literary quality of competitions—too busy. At your age it is impossible to say whether you are cut out for a literary career. Write again in eight or nine years' time. Your handwriting is capital.

R. M. (LONDON, E.C.).—(1) Jackson's "Theory and Practice of Handwriting," or Pitman's "Business Handwriting," would help you to improve your caligraphy. The price of the former is 5s., and the latter 1s. They may both be obtained, less the usual discount, from Messrs. Denny, Booksellers' Row, Strand. (2) Write to either of the firms whose advertisements of model locomotives, tenders, etc., appear in our pages.

W. J. M. writes: "With regard to 'D'Artagnan's' question as to the parent of the Vicomte de Bragellone, Athos was de Bragellone's father, which he will find definitely stated in several places in the 'Vicomte de Bragellone'; and if he turns to page 118 of 'Twenty Years After,' he will see that the Vicomte's mother was the Duchesse de Chevreuse."

F. K.—Thanks for your letter. We have not received any similar communications, but if we should do so the point you suggest will be further considered. The statement was founded on the writer's personal knowledge of a large number of cases. Although solicitors who *make a business* of taking articled clerks, and have not much practice, may accept a smaller premium than the one he quoted, that does not affect his statement as to what is the usual premium to a solicitor of *good standing*.

C. J. P.—Glad to hear THE CAPTAIN tops the tree in your reading club. As regards your measurements, you had better not trouble your head about them. Whatever size Nature has ordained you to be, that size you will be. Of course, dumb-bells and exercise will develop muscle, and the same things will make you grow taller if Nature doesn't stop in and say you have grown tall enough.

A School-boy and **A Lover of the Light Blue** are thanked for their charming letters. I am delighted to hear that "A Lover of the Light Blue" managed to beguile her journey from Brussels so successfully with THE CAPTAIN, which appears to figure prominently on most of the French bookstalls.

R. N. B.—Sorry no space for your verses.

R. E. (BOURNEMOUTH).—It is rather difficult to say which class of sailing ship would be most to your liking. Get the *Shipping Gazette* (through a newsagent) and write for particulars to the firms advertising for a "*few* passengers." Also get one of the Liverpool weekly papers, where you will find similar information.

P. H. Lewis.—Write the head master a polite note asking for printed particulars. Consult "Public School Year Book" (2s. 6d.). Yes, you are rather old (seventeen) to be thinking of taking such a step.

One of the Sisters. Glad to hear we are read so diligently at Dulwich. Have packed your suggestion away in our brain-box.

Information.—Coupons for December "comps." must be taken out of the December number. I am always telling people this. The present system must stand until I can think of a better one. Have handed the rest of your letter to Mr Manning Foster, who will reply to you next month.

M. FitzGerald.—Have handed your chess problem to the Chess Editor, who will let you know what he thinks of it next month.

P. M. H. and **P. S. H.** will, I hope, receive attention next month. Bear up till then, "P. M. H.," and "P. S. H."

William the Conqueror.—A loud-sounding name for a boy of ten! As to your questions: (1) No, there isn't a Mrs. Fag yet, and I still have to sew my own buttons on—a tedious job, when you come to think how frequently they come off! (2) I wish *you* a Merry Christmas, and trust your Majesty will not over-eat your royal self.

G. W. E. R. (OLD HARROVIAN).—Very pleased to hear from you.

F. M. K.—We shall be publishing an article on Winchester College some time in 1900, I'm hoping.

R. W. G. Thanks for funny extract. I have used it. Your queries shall be answered next month.

F. Percy.—Of the three businesses you mention I should choose the iron and steel trade. However, go in for what you're best suited for.

R. G. Dixon Addey, Ernest Wass, H. A. Diboll, R. O. Alty, "Chess Player," J. A. D., Helen Wodehouse, and others, are thanked for their corrections re my reply to "Yun-Yun." In future all chess queries will be referred to the Chess Editor, who knows a good deal more about the game than your tired-out, badgered, and worrited

OLD FAG.

Dear Sir, Japan 2/8.1899

Je suis pauvre garçon de dix ans, j'apprends Anglais et français de mon oncle qui est très bon pour moi et ma sœur. And I became a stamp collector since last year as my Cousin who is the son of rich man I give you these two stamps (memorial stamps of our victory over China 1894-1895) and this ancient coin. On exchange, please give me some stamps. I am Your new & true oriental boy friend

Tsne Sekiguchi,
13 Sakuraimura,
Kita-Katsushika, Saitamake

(An Anglo-French letter from a Japanese reader of THE CAPTAIN.)

"CAPTAIN" COMPETITIONS FOR DECEMBER.

The highest age limit is twenty-five.

CONDITIONS.—The Coupon on Page II. of advertisements must be fastened or stuck on every competition submitted. If this rule is disregarded the competition will be disqualified. Letters to the Editor should not be sent with competitions.

The name and address of every competitor must be clearly written at the top of first page of competition.

We trust to your honour to send in unaided work.

GIRLS may compete.

You may enter for as many competitions as you like (providing you come within the age limits), and have as many tries as you like for each prize, but each "try" must have a coupon attached to it.

In every case the Editor's decision is final, and he cannot enter into correspondence with unsuccessful competitors.

Pages should be connected with paper-fasteners; not pins.

When competitions are to be sent on post-cards, no coupons should be attached, as this is contrary to post-office regulations.

Address thus:—Competition No.——, "THE CAPTAIN," 12, Burleigh Street, Strand, London.

All competitions except No. 1 should reach us by December 16th.

No. 1.—**Special Prize.** A "Gramophone" **(value £5 10s. 0d.)** will be presented to the reader who sends in the most correct list of the "Best Twelve Short Stories" which have appeared in THE CAPTAIN since its commencement, up to, and including, the present number (December, 1899). Those who missed the early numbers can order them through their newsagent, or direct from the publisher, post free, 9d. Likewise, Vol. I may be had for 6s.

This competition will be decided like the "English Team for Australia" one, *i.e., by vote.* Each short story named will receive one mark, and when it has been found how many marks each story has got, the lists will be gone through again, and the competitor who has the "Best Twelve Short Stories" in the most correct order will receive the "Gramophone." Send lists in thus:—

I consider the following Twelve Short Stories, in order of merit, to be the best that have appeared in THE CAPTAIN *since its commencement.*

	STORY.	AUTHOR'S NAME.
(1)	Mrs. Smith's Little Boy ...	John Jones.
(2)	Red, White and Blue	Peter Brown.
	Etc., etc.	

Age limit: Twenty-five. Last day for sending in (to give foreign and Colonial readers a chance), January 16, 1900.

[NOTE.—This Special Competition gives everybody a chance, as a small boy can draw up a list of tales just as well as a big one. Send as many lists as you like, but *see that a coupon is attached to each list.* As this competition runs for two months, you can attach either the December or January coupon to your list.]

No. 2.—**£1 1s. 0d.** for the best poetical extract on "Glory." Age limit: Twenty-five.

[Competitors should take care not to send in any extracts which have already appeared in our poetry pages.]

No. 3.—**10s. 6d.** for the best piece of serious verse (original, of course) describing "A Charge of Cavalry." Poem must not exceed twenty lines. Age limit: Twenty-five.

No. 4.—**£1 1s. 0d.** for the best solution of the chess problem which you will find on page 287. Age limit: Twenty.

No. 5.—**10s. 6d.** for the best drawing of "A Boy Running." Age limit: Eighteen.

No. 6.—**15s. 0d.** for the best "Story Told by a War-Horse." (Not to exceed 400 words.) Age limit: Seventeen.

No. 7.—**10s. 6d.** for the best list of "Contrary Proverbs," such as:—

"Strike while the iron's hot."
"Second thoughts are best."

Age limit: Fifteen.

No. 8.—**10s. 6d.** for the best map showing the course of the River Nile. Age limit: Thirteen.

No. 9.—**7s. 6d.** for the best "Letter to the Old Fag" on "My Favourite Lessons." Age limit: Eleven.

No. 10.—**5s. 0d.** Same subject. Age limit: Nine.

[EDITORIAL NOTE.—Consolation Prizes will be awarded in every competition—age being taken into consideration.]

WAR-HORSE (*loq.*): "Apple, sir? Thank you, kindly, sir. I *will* have just a little one. Tell you all about ——. Well, I'll try, sir. It was like this——"

—(Vide Competition No. 6).

Results of October Competitions.

No. I.—Best Poetical Extract on "Christmas."

WINNER OF £1 1s.: JOHN M. MACFARLANE, 34, West End Park Street, Glasgow.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE (Vol. I. of THE CAPTAIN) has been awarded to: RUPERT GRANVILLE HARROP, "The Grange," Holinwood, Oldham.

HONOURABLE MENTION: M. de R. Philp, Henry Sharples, Frank T Phillips, William Armstrong, Helen K. Watts, Joan Thomas, Owen Chitty, Ellen P. Claydon, Gertrude Argyle, G. R. Howell-John, Ida Oppenheim, Arthur Gardiner, Ethel Grigg, Madeline Mather, C. Topley, H. Terry, Edith Gow, Kate C. Lovelock, Edward Allen, F. A. Taylor, D. S. Robertson, George A. Armstrong, A. F. Morrison, Barbara Stranack, D. M. Watts, W. H. Mills, Janie Gillespie, E. Onless, Edith Hillier, Helen C. Tancock, and those who sent familiar extracts from Shakespeare, Scott, and Tennyson too numerous to mention.

No. II.—Chess Problem.

WINNER OF £1 1s.: ARTHUR S. ARNOLD, 143, Wright Street, Small Heath, Birmingham.

CONSOLATION PRIZES (Vol. I. of THE CAPTAIN) have been awarded to: JOHN SMALPAGE STANIFORTH, "Homedale," Pattison Road, Child's Hill, London, N.W.; and ERNEST OSBORNE TANCOCK, Little Waltham, Chelmsford.

HONOURABLE MENTION: A. H. Davidson, C. Harte, J. F. Hay, A. J. Head, L. Larquet, E. Wass, G. Walker, R. G. Weil, A. C. Harrison, C. B. Joyner, C. D. Hannah, W. Hayward, T. Walker, N. J. Chignell, W. Kaye, H. Burton, J. Lowdon, R. C. Jennings, H. G. Philpot, E. H. Cable, H. J. Cudmore, R. G. D. Addey, G. W. Chambers, D. Roome, P. Wilkins, M. Fitz-Gerald.

(More than two hundred competitors did not send all possible solutions. Several others were disqualified for not complying with conditions.)

No. III.—Stamp Designs Competition.

WINNERS OF STAMP ALBUMS: ERNEST REDMAN, 16, All Souls' Road, Haley Hill, Halifax, Yorkshire; and H. D. DIXON, Penarth, Truro, Cornwall.

WINNERS OF STAMP PACKETS: BURDETTE JOHNSON, 2755A, Lafayette Ave, St. Louis, Missouri, U.S.A.; K. E. COOPER, "Head Master's," Harrow; GORDON BROWNE, 42, Halcombe Street, Belfast; G. A. VOULE, Amsterdam, Herrengracht, 540, Holland.

No. IV.—Best Design or Idea for Advertising THE CAPTAIN.

WINNER OF £1 1s.: FRED MEREDITH, 112, Grayshott Road, Lavender Hill, S.W.

CONSOLATION PRIZES (Vol. I. of THE CAPTAIN) have been awarded to: ARTHUR C. BEACH, 100, Cowley Road, Brixton, S.W.; and H. KER-FOX, Denstone College, Uttoxeter, Staffordshire.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Sam Flower Brooks, W. Bridge, Rupert G. Rogers, C. G. C. King, Percy R. Green, J. W. Hicks, Gordon McVoy, G. A. Warren, W. J. Hamilton Hunter, J. H. Mont, Jennie Clasper, A. D. Pipe, Hubert Townsend, F. G. Bristow, A. E. Lockyer, E. A. Duncan, Philip Hughes, H. Thomas, R. K. Brown.

No. V.—Best List of Nick-names of Famous Men.

WINNERS OF 10s. 6d. EACH: J. G. RITCHIE, the Grammar School, Co. Down, Ireland; and JOHN B. EDGAR, "Ashton," Lockerbie, N.B.

CONSOLATION PRIZES (Vol. I. of THE CAPTAIN) have been awarded to: ANNIE MCDONALD, The Green, Southall, Middlesex; and JAMES MCDONALD FINLAYSON, "The Manse," Burntisland.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Charles Leigh, Thomas John Jones, Lilian R. Ormiston, William Whittaker, R. Keith Brown, and Fred Robertson.

No. VI.—Best Drawing from Life of "A Head."

THE PRIZE OF £1 1s. has been divided between ROSE M. GARDENER, "Bertram House," Sidcup, Kent; and MAUD CENTARO, 11, Viale Macchiavelli, Florence, Italy.

CONSOLATION PRIZES (Vol. I. of THE CAPTAIN) have been awarded to: C. STRANGE, H.M.S. *Britannia*, Dartmouth; D. NEWILL, "The Homestead," Winchester; and HILDA E. MILLER, "Ormidale," Somerset Road, New Barnet.

HONOURABLE MENTION: G. H. Cox, G. A. Hicks, Kathleen Rogers, Constance Davis, A. McHuraith, C. E. Stewart A. McCallum, A. N. Sutherland, Arthur E. Hibbs, H. Clayton-Smith, Jean M. Thistlethwaite, Elsa Hedderwick, Gerald Leake, N. Keir, E. H. Timmins, Harold Kershaw, Olive M. Mankm.

No. VII.—Best List of Spelling Mistakes.

THE PRIZE OF £1 1s. has been divided between: CHARLES HILL, 29, Mint, Exeter; WILLIAM ANGUS, 59, Balmoral Place, Aberdeen; and DOROTHY M. FALKNER, "Balfour House," Grand Parade, Portsmouth.

No. VIII.—Handwriting Competition. (Age limit: Fourteen.)

WINNERS OF 5s. EACH: MAY LILIAN COLWELL, "Glendyming," Talbot Road, Highgate, N.; T. S. O. WATKINS, South Eastern College, Ramsgate; BERTRAM JAMES CRATER, 20, St. Mary's Road, Walthamstow; E. BAYTON, "Sussex House," 61, Highbury New Park, London, N.

CONSOLATION PRIZES (Vol. I. of THE CAPTAIN) have been awarded to: REGINALD ANDERSON, Infant Orphan Asylum, Wanstead, Essex; and JACK MOSS, 26, Wallace Road, Canonbury, N.

HONOURABLE MENTION: H. R. Woodhead, Janet Walker, Alfred Ernest, A. J. Shore, Gwendolen Braddell, Martha Longmire, S. H. Coleman, T. J. Coom.

No. IX.—Handwriting Competition. (Age limit: Twelve.)

WINNERS OF 5s. EACH: NORAH WARD, Beech Lane, Macclesfield; WILLIAM BURRELL, 2, Granby Place, Hillhead, Glasgow; H. GARDINER, 48, Bolingbroke Grove, Wandsworth Common, S.W.; and H. L. WATKINS, 8, Tivoli Road, Crouch End, N.

CONSOLATION PRIZES (Vol. I. of THE CAPTAIN) have been awarded to: STELLA MARY MAXWELL, 3, Fulwood Park, Liverpool; and HAROLD PRICE, 10, Paignton Road, Birmingham.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Eveline Wannell, Ernest Jephcott, Edgar Owen, Nina Kirby, Noelle Aldridge.

No. X.—Handwriting Competition. (Age limit: Ten.)

WINNERS OF 2s. 6d. EACH: HILDA MARGARET GOULDEN, 56, Finsbury Park Road, London, N.; RALPH HEAPY, 22, Wellesley Street, Shelton, Stoke-on-Trent; BERTIE ANDERSON, "Glenburn Hall," Jedburgh; WALTER A. ATKINSON, 122, Greyhound Lane, Streatham, S.W.

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